4383.aa.2

A FULL and FINAL

REPLY

TO

Mr. *Toll*'s DEFENCE

OF

Dr. *Middleton*'s Free Inquiry.

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

In ANSWER to

Every Particular in Dr. *Middleton*'s Vindication:

AND A

PREFACE,

ON THE

CREDIBILITY of MIRACLES,

Occasioned by the

TWO PREVIOUS QUESTIONS.

By WILLIAM DODWELL, D.D.
Rector of *Shottesbrook*, *Berks*, and Prebendary of *Sarum*.

LONDON:
Printed for S. BIRT, at the *Bible* and *Ball* in *Ave-mary-Lane*.

M DCC LI.

PREFACE

PREFACE.

IT is of no Importance to the Publick, to be acquainted with the Accidents which prevented my ſeeing Mr. Toll's Defence *for ſome Time after it was publiſhed, the Domeſtick Cares which engroſſed my Attention at that Seaſon, and the other Buſineſs which engaged the firſt Leiſure that I could obtain for Application to Study. Upon a curſory Peruſal of it, I laid it by, till I might ſee whether Dr.* M. *would think it worth while to* vindicate Himſelf, *or would be willing to truſt his Cauſe to this* Defence; *for I did not think that either the* Civility *or* Weight *of the Performance required any immediate Notice. But having now recovered a little more Leiſure, I have conſidered it more attentively, and ſhall here offer my farther Reflections on it to the Publick. If there be any Part of the Queſtion, which may be thought to deſerve a more particular Conſideration than is offered in this* Reply, *perhaps it is That, which relates to the* general Credibility of Miracles. *It is eaſy to raiſe Difficulties on ſuch a Point as this, and it may not be ſo eaſy to clear them all. The abſurd Stories, which have been reported and received, have raiſed a Prejudice in Many againſt the* Belief *of* all *Miracles; and a Regard to the good Character of* Witneſſes, *without an Examination of the* Fact *in all its* Circumſtances, *has betrayed others into groſs* Superſtitions *and* Follies; *ſo that genuine Miracles have often been rejected, and ſpurious ones admitted; and* Infidelity *or* Credulity *have too much divided the World. Some proper Marks of Di-*

ſtinction are juſtly called for, and may, I think, be aſſigned to the Satisfaction of every reaſonable and careful Inquirer. I am the more inclined to look into this Subject, not only on Account of its near Connection *with the main Point in Diſpute, but becauſe it has been conſidered by another Writer in ſuch a Manner, as may be thought to prejudice the Evidence offered for the* Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church. *It is indeed the Profeſſed Deſign of this Author not to concern himſelf with the Controverſy between Dr.* M. *and his Adverſaries, but his Opinion, and the Tendency of his Argument to ſupport it, are eaſily enough diſcernible. I am obliged to this Gentleman for his Approbation of the Manner in which I had treated this Argument, which I would not forfeit; and I think his Attempt to ſhew the Superiority of the Goſpel-Miracles, and to guard againſt Conſequences* which might reach too far, *highly commendable. Neither would I be underſtood to be writing an Anſwer to his Sentiments and Reflections, but to ſhew that his State of the Caſe, as far as it appears to me to be right, which is in a great Part of it, does not overthrow the Evidence offered on our Side; but that his* Conceſſions, *in ſeveral Places, are all that are neceſſary to ſupport the Teſtimony of the* Primitive Fathers *in this Particular. He has thrown in, however,* occaſionally, *ſome Remarks directly calculated to weaken the Force of what had been offered by the Oppoſers of Dr.* M.*'s new Scheme, which he will excuſe my taking Notice of.*

He begins, in his Preface *to the* previous Queſtions, *with obſerving, that* "*No Two of the Dr's Oppoſers* "*agree in the Point,* How long *after the Apoſtolick* "*Age Miracles continued, but that fix upon the Hy-* "*potheſis of which of theſe Gentlemen you will, you* "*are ſure to have* Four *out of* Five *againſt the Scheme* "*you pitch on.*" *I think the Repreſentation, which He himſelf has given of their Opinions, may ſhew the contrary;*

contrary; and that if you ſuppoſe them to continue 'till the Civil Eſtabliſhment *of Chriſtianity, and to ceaſe about that Time, you will have* Four *of theſe* Five *Gentlemen on your Side. The Firſt did not limit their Continuance to the Times of* Origen, *but added expreſsly,* many more Teſtimonies might be offered, *tho' he had neither Leiſure or Inclination, He ſays, to proceed farther: If He had, it may be preſumed that He would have brought them down to the Period aſſigned; eſpecially as three ſevere Perſecutions, which ſeemed to need them, interfered in that Interval.* "*The* "Second, *it is ſaid, carried them to the End of the* "Third Century." *This would be very near the Time of the* Civil Eſtabliſhment *of Chriſtianity; but in Reality this Gentleman went farther, to that very Period* expreſsly, *calling on Dr.* M. *to prove that the Miracles of the Fourth Century were* all forged *(P.* 31.) *The Opinions of the* Third *and* Fourth, *as delivered in their own Words, were, that Miracles continued till the* Civil Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity; *that* "*probably many wonderful Works were afterwards* "*wrought for ſome great Ends;*" *and that* "*we* "*have Reaſon to think that they ceaſed* ſome Time "after *the* Civil Eſtabliſhment of *our Religion.*" *Here is as exact a Concurrence of Opinion as could be between thoſe, who think that the withdrawing of theſe Gifts might be* gradual, *and who yet have aſſigned one common Period as the Concluſion of what might ſtrictly be called the* Age of Miracles; *and to which Period every one of them profeſſedly confined his Vindication. This was as great an Agreement about the Time of this remarkable Incident, as could be expected; and this Gentleman Himſelf cannot forbear the Reflection which every one makes on the great* Preciſion *and* Exactneſs *with which Mr.* Whiſton *has determined this Point, who has aſſigned the very Year in which He ſuppoſes the laſt Miracle to have been wrought. Had the Dif-*

ference of Opinion been great between the Adverſaries of Dr. M. *on this Article of the Time of their Continuance, it would not at all have affected the main Queſtion, as I have obſerved in the enſuing Papers: But, in Reality, there is a remarkable Agreement on this Head between Thoſe Writers who are here ſpoken of.*

" *But the Firſt* Queſtion previous *to this Controverſy, which, as this Gentleman rightly obſerves, ought to be conſidered, and which ſeems to be of no ſmall Conſequence, is,* What are the *Grounds* upon which the *Credibility* of Miracles in general is founded?"

Some Pages are ſpent to prove what ſhould readily be admitted, that We may *and* ought *to enquire into theſe Grounds of* Credibility, *and this Proof is made out from the Reaſon of the Thing, from the Authority of Scripture, and from the abſurd Stories which have been propagated for Want of ſuch free Inquiry.* " *It ſeems,*" *ſays This Author,* " *to be a fair Queſtion, and not to be anſwered with a* Jeſt, *which St.* Auſtin *puts as from ſome Unbelievers, Why, ſay They, are not Thoſe Miracles, which You ſay were done formerly, now done? His Anſwer was, He that requires Miracles to be done* now, *in Order to his Belief, is Himſelf a great* Miracle, *who does not believe when* all the World believes." *Notwithſtanding the Turn of Expreſſion, this Anſwer of St.* Auſtin *certainly contains much more than a* Jeſt, *and refers to the very Diſtinction proper to be ſuggeſted upon this Enquiry. The World had then been newly converted to the Profeſſion of the Goſpel by the Force of* Miracles, *in Oppoſition to all their Prepoſſeſſions and Luſts, and this* Fact *of ſo univerſal a* Converſion, *which was not to be accounted for but from the* Reality *of the* Evidence, *might well be conſidered as an* Argument *of their* Truth, *might prevent the farther Neceſſity of ſuch extraordinary Interpoſitions, and might*

be

be thought to render Him a ſurprizing *Inſtance of* Incredulity, *who could withſtand the Force of ſuch a Conſideration. I do not perceive that St.* Auſtin *gave the leaſt Hint in this Place againſt the Reaſonableneſs of examining into them, but referred to a very proper Point, the* Succeſs *of thoſe which had ſtood the Teſt of the ſtricteſt Examination. By theſe the moſt inveterate Prejudices were already overcome, and Chriſtianity ſo far eſtabliſhed as to ſtand no longer in Need of ſupernatural Aſſiſtance; which was the right Anſwer, and a very ſufficient one, to the Queſtion, which was put to him.*

That the Evidence of Miracles propoſed to our Aſſent ought to be examined into, will admit of no Diſpute amongſt reaſonable Men. The Publick Offer of them to Examination at the Time they were wrought, is a Circumſtance of the utmoſt Conſequence to eſtabliſh their Credibility. Many may have been genuine, which had not that Advantage; but thoſe, which were ſo propoſed to Enquiry, which ſtood that Teſt, and turned Oppoſers into Advocates, come recommended to Poſterity with the higheſt Tokens of Genuineneſs. Reports of Stories, which were reported to the Writers of them, and which never ſtood the Teſt of induſtrious and ſagacious Enemies, are not to be parallel'd with thoſe in the forementioned Circumſtances; and a Collection of a thouſand ſuch Legends from Heathens *and* Papiſts, *will not leſſen the Credibility of ſuch Miracles as are related by many Witneſſes in diſtant Places, who deſired their Adverſaries to look into them, and who ſtaked every valuable Hope upon their Sincerity. It ſeemed proper to obſerve this at firſt, and once for all, becauſe the Inſertion of ſuch Stories ſeems to be rather for* Diverſion *than* Uſe. *They interrupt the View of the Argument, and prove nothing but what will be granted without them, that much* Nonſenſe and Abſurdity have been obtruded on the Word under the Pretence of Hiſtory *(P. 12.)*

The more Occaſion there is to examine into them, and into the general Grounds of the Credibility of Miracles, *which are not illuſtrated by the Repetition of many Legends. The confeſſed* Falſehood *of many ſuch Reports does not prove that there never was* any Truth *in any; nay the Truth of ſome miraculous Interpoſitions is confeſſed by All Parties who have engaged in the preſent Controverſy.*

The Difficulties which have been raiſed concerning the Poſſibility *of Miracles, are out of the Queſtion at preſent. It is acknowledged that They* may *be wrought, and* have been *wrought on ſome important Occaſions, The preſent Queſtion is, What Circumſtances may reaſonably entitle the Report of them to our Aſſent?*

This Gentleman begins with obſerving, that "*wherever Things* out of *the* common Courſe *of Nature* "*are told, they are in themſelves liable to* Doubt *and* "Suſpicion, *and are rather incredible than credible* "*at firſt View*" (*P.* 2.) *There ſeems here to be great Want of Accuracy both in the Expreſſion, and the Sentiment, for the Author, I preſume, meant no more than that they were rather* not credible *than* credible, *i. e. rather unlikely than likely at firſt View. As the* Poſſibility *of them is admitted, and ſeveral.* Examples *of Things* out of the common Courſe of Nature *being performed on important Occaſions, are likewiſe acknowledged, we cannot paſs any Judgment, till we have looked into the Circumſtances of the Caſe; nor are they* incredible *or* credible *at firſt View, or* more *or* leſs *the one than the other, till the Nature of the Teſtimony be taken into Conſideration. That they are* unuſual *and* infrequent *is no Prejudice againſt the Truth of them, becauſe the* Occaſion *of them may be* uncommon *too, for any Thing which yet appears; and ſince this Queſtion is ſtarted amongſt Thoſe, who acknowledge that the Author of Nature has* ſometimes *reverſed the Laws of it, on Exigencies which his infinite Wiſdom ſaw worthy*

thy of ſuch an Interpoſition, it is highly credible, that He may do this again in a like Situation of Mankind; and therefore there is no more Preſumption againſt a Report of Miracles than for it, merely from this Circumſtance of their being out of the common Courſe of Nature. This firſt View, being confined to that Conſideration, is of no Weight on One Side or the Other amongſt Believers, but the Credibility of the Facts reported muſt depend on the farther View of the State of the Things reported, and of the Reporters of them. As ſoon as we find any Reaſon, from the Circumſtances of the Caſe, to think that the Witneſſes were deceived Themſelves, or had any Intent to deceive Us, then, and not till then, ariſes a Preſumption againſt the Truth of the Report.

Credibility, it ſhould be obſerved, relates to the Evidence by which any Report is confirmed to Us; and therefore when a Thing in its own Nature poſſible is aſſerted, we cannot, from Any thing in the Nature of it, preſuppoſe its Falſhood. When we ſay a Thing is incredible in itſelf, we mean, and ought to mean, that it is incapable of being proved by any Teſtimony: and this can ſtrictly be ſaid of Nothing but an Impoſſibility. To ſay, therefore, that a Fact reported is, at firſt View, rather incredible than credible, is a Form of Speech neither warranted by the common nor the philoſophical Uſe of the Words; for if the Meaning be, that ſuch Facts are rather unlikely than likely at firſt View, would it not be better to ſay ſo in plain Terms? and then the proper Anſwer will be, that Things, which at firſt View may appear unuſual and improbable, may, upon farther Examination, be confirmed by ſuch Teſtimony as to be made unqueſtionable; and This is allowed by this Author in ſeveral Inſtances. The Circumſtances of the Fact, we readily allow, are to be taken into Conſideration, as well as the Character of the Witneſſes, and the Reaſon is, becauſe by theſe we may often determine, whether the Reporters

were not deceived *in the Caſe, and guided by a falſe Judgment in their Report. This may well affect the Force of their* Teſtimony, *but ſtill, in this Light, the* Credibility *of the Facts depends on the* external Evidence, *and is admitted or rejected according to our Opinion of the* Wiſdom *and* Integrity *of the Witneſſes.*

"*A High Degree of* Improbability," *ſays this Gentleman,* "*in all* common *Caſes, except where* "*Miracles are concerned, is allowed to produce the* "*ſame Effect in denying all Aſſent, as* Impoſſibility "*itſelf; but, in this Particular, mere* Improbability "*of the Thing is not deemed ſufficient to deſtroy all* "*Credit.*" (*P.* 3.) *But why not equally in the one Caſe as in the other? I have not met with this Diſtinction amongſt any Writers on this Subject, nor obſerved the Fact in the Courſe of Life. The* Improbability *which excludes Aſſent in all* common *Caſes, is not that Improbability which appears* at the firſt View, *but that which is founded upon a* Review *of the whole Caſe; and if the ſame continues to appear upon a like thorough Examination of the Report of* Miracles, *why ſhould it not have the ſame Effect? Let not the* Improbability of Miracles *ariſe merely from their being* ſuch, *that is, from their being* out of the common Courſe of Nature, *but from any* natural *or* moral *Incapacity in the Witneſſes, and This will be deemed ſufficient to deſtroy their Credit in this Particular, as well as in any other. In all Caſes, where it appears more* improbable *that the Thing ſhould be true, than that the Witneſſes ſhould, either thro' Fraud, or Self-Deceit, concur to impoſe upon us, there the Report, whether of a* natural *or* ſupernatural *Kind, will of Courſe be rejected; and this Gentleman has remarked the Fact in the latter Caſe, even where the Atteſtation has been attended with all the particular Circumſtances of Perſons, and Times, and Places,*

The

The Intent, He adds, of ſuch Tales, and his Remarks on them, was to ſhew, " *that the Hiſtorian,* " *who may be credited in* ordinary *Occurrences, yet is* " *not to be truſted or believed, without ſtrict Exami-* " *nation, when He relates extraordinary Facts.* (*P.* 12.) *But what Proteſtant expects or deſires that* extraordinary *Facts ſhould be credited without ſtrict Examination? The Primitive Fathers did not, for they offered their Claims to the ſtricteſt Scrutiny; nor do the rational Defenders of them at this Time, for They think there is a* peculiar *and* extraordinary *Concurrence of Circumſtances to confirm thoſe Claims, which cannot be ſhewn to have attended any Falſhood.*

On the other Hand this Gentleman cenſures Biſhop Atterbury's *Reflection* " *on the Pretenders to Won-* " *der-working in* China *or* Japan, *where there was* " *no Fear of a Diſcovery; or ſometimes in* Spain *or* " Italy, *where there were many always ready to fa-* " *vour ſuch Pretences,*" *and ſays, that* " *this Way of* " *raiſing a Difficulty or Objection will equally lie againſt* " *real Miracles wrought any where at a Diſtance from* " *us.*" *I muſt here beg Leave to diſſent from him, and to think that the Biſhop's Reflection is a very juſt one. For when Any pretend to have worked Miracles at a Diſtance, where we have no other Evidence than their Word, that They* made ſuch Pretenſions *at all; or where, if They did make them, the People may be ſuppoſed not* qualified *to judge of them; or where, if they were qualified, They were* prejudiced *in their Favour, and* intereſted *in the Belief of them, if Thoſe who pretend to have worked Miracles in ſuch Circumſtances, refuſe to repeat the ſame, where there is the ſame or greater Occaſion, before Thoſe who are able and willing to examine them, This is a reaſonable Cauſe of Suſpicion; but this Reflection is not equally of Force againſt all real Miracles done at a Diſtance; the Pretenſions to which were made* openly, *diſperſed in* Writing

ting *at the Time, ſubmitted to the Examination of* Enemies, *in Times and Places of* Literature; *and which, in thoſe Circumſtances, turned many of their Adverſaries into Profeſſors and Patrons of their Cauſe. The former, which is reflected on by the* Biſhop, *is the Caſe of the Pretenſions of the* Papiſts, *which, for the Cauſes there ſuggeſted, may reaſonably be rejected: The Latter is the Caſe of the Claim of the* Primitive Fathers, *which, being propoſed to the Wiſe and Learned Senate of* Rome, *as well as to the Governors and People of other Places, and proſpering under the moſt publick Propoſals of Enquiry, may on that Account be reaſonably admitted.*

This Diſtinction may be of Uſe, if applied to all the Inſtances reported by this Gentleman. He Himſelf, after having given up the Accounts of Miracles given by the Jeſuits, *near Two Hundred Years ago, as fabulous, proceeds to look backward* Twelve *or* Thirteen Hundred *Years, or a Century higher ſtill, and to enquire into "the poſitive Evidence of Miracles done in thoſe "Times, Miracles, ſays He, wrought before good Men, "able to judge, and honeſtly diſpoſed to tell the whole "Truth." (Pag. 20.) Such a Character of the Witneſſes, different, by his own Confeſſion, from that of the* Jeſuits, *is a Preſumptive Circumſtance in Favour of their Reports, and will render them* rather credible than incredible at the firſt View. "*But, ſays He, "whether the Grounds of Credibility alter with Ages, "is the Point in Debate." I ſhould apprehend that That could never be Matter of Debate betwixt ſenſible Writers. What is credible at* one Time *muſt, if all the Circumſtances be the ſame, be credible at* all Times: *But Circumſtances of* Fact *may vary, and may make particular Reports more or leſs credible in different Ages, tho' the general Grounds of Credibility continue always the ſame. That there was a very material Difference of Circumſtances in the Ages before the Eſtabliſhment*

of

of Chriſtianity, and all After-Ages, and more eſpecially theſe latter ones, has been particularly ſhewn in the enſuing Sheets, and need not here be repeated. Dr. M. *Himſelf has obſerved of the Fourth Century, that* "*that* "*Age, in which Chriſtianity was eſtabliſhed by the Ci-*"*vil Power, had no real Occaſion for any Miracles.*" Introd. Diſc. *(P.* 36.*) This Remark affords a preſumptive Argument againſt all After-Reports, and in Favour of the preceding ones; and may ſhew, that tho' Credibility does not depend merely on the Diſtance of Ages, yet it may depend much on the Circumſtances of Times, and that what may be very credible in one Situation, may be very much otherwiſe in a different one. However, we ſhall very readily admit the next Reflection offered by this Author in the Way of Reaſoning, that* "*if ſome Facts are related which bear about* "*them evident Marks of* Improbability, *one cannot* "*but* ſuſpect, *or* ſuſpend *one's Judgment, notwith-*"*ſtanding the Confidence with which they are told,* "*unleſs there be ſome Circumſtances more than* com-"mon Teſtimony, *which may lead one to give Cre-*"*dit to the Relation.*" *(P.* 26.*) We think that ſuch Circumſtances did attend, and have been ſhewn to attend, the concurrent Report of the Primitive Fathers in the Caſe in View.*

We are next entertained with an Account, which particularly concerns the Adverſaries of Dr. M. *as they have All laid ſome Streſs upon it. It is here repreſented as a Miracle as well atteſted as Any, and yet as certainly groundleſs, and contradictory in the very Report of it: And it ſeems introduced to ſhew, that the ſtrongeſt Teſtimony cannot confirm ſo improbable a Story, and that all After-Relations are the more to be ſuſpected for the Miſtake which is ſome way ſuppoſed to have happened in this ſo early and ſolemn an Atteſtation. It relates to the Prophecy of St.* Polycarp, *and the Completion*

pletion of it, concerning his being burnt, which this Gentleman ſays happened otherwiſe than had been foretold, " *as if it had happened on Purpoſe to ſhame all* " *ſuch as* pretended *to the Heavenly Gift of Prophe-* " *cy, without having it.*" (P. 29.)—" *In Fact,*" *He ſays,* " *He was not* burnt alive, *but when He was* " Dead; *directly contrary to his Prophecy.*" (P. 30.) *This was an Objection which had eſcaped Dr.* M. *and his* Defender, *yet is here brought as an obvious Proof of the Falſhood of the Report, or of his Pretenſion to a Prophetick Spirit. Should I aſk, What Connection this Story, according to this Gentleman's own Repreſentation of it, has with the State of the Caſe concerning the* Credibility of Miracles *in general, or how conſiſtent this Account is with the profeſſed Deſign of not entring into the Controverſy between Dr.* M. *and his Adverſaries, I might be thought rather to bring a Difficulty on this Gentleman, than to clear that which is propoſed by Him. Let Us therefore conſider the Charge of* Contradiction, *which is here brought againſt this Relation.* Polycarp *ſeeing in a Viſion his Pillow, or what was under his Head,* all on Fire, *ſaid* prophetically *to thoſe about him,* I muſt be burnt alive. *The Event was, that he was ſoon after ſeized, and condemned to the Flames, which could not but ſtrongly affect thoſe, who knew He had thus foretold the* Manner *of his Death, when other Methods of Execution were more probable, even in Caſe of a Perſecution. How then was this Prophecy, in Fact, contradicted? Was this Sentence reverſed, and was He not put to the Fiery Trial? No. This is not pretended. He was put on the Pile, the Hiſtory tells us, and the Fire kindled around Him. Did He then eſcape from it in any Method, and return alive and ſound to his Friends? Neither is This pretended. He loſt his Life in the enduring of it, and, according to his Prayer at that very Seaſon, was that very Day* accepted by God as a well-pleaſing Sacri-

fice,

fice, as He had fore-ordained it, and manifeſted it before-hand, and now fulfilled it. *How then did his Prediction fail of Accompliſhment? Why the Fire, it is obſerved, was not the* immediate *Cauſe of his Death, but the Executioner's Sword. And is it not uſually ſo amongſt others that are ſentenced to this Kind of Death, that the mortal Wound is received in ſome other Method? Does this Gentleman think that the Law is not executed, or that we cannot, with Propriety of Speech, ſay that ſuch an One is* burnt alive, *becauſe a* Coup de Grace *is generally given, or that they are, through Favour, ſtrangled at the Stake before the Torture of the Flames can much affect them? Could it be* foretold *of any Perſons amongſt us, that come to this unhappy End, that they ſhould be* burnt alive, *would Any other Perſon in the Kingdom except againſt the Completion of it, becauſe the Executioner was permitted or bribed to give a favourable Blow, which might make the Sufferer inſenſible of the acuter Pains of the Fire? Common Senſe, and the cuſtomary Uſe of ſuch Phraſes, afford a ſufficient Anſwer to this Objection, and if the Legal Senſe, and popular Acceptation of the Meaning of ſuch a Sentence as that of being* burnt alive, *be fully anſwered, as it was in this Caſe, I think we need not much diſturb ourſelves about Critical Obſervations on the Words, or ſuch Objections as ariſe from them.* Polycarp *was committed alive to the Flames, He returned not alive from them; but was, in the End, burnt to Aſhes; and thus the Sentence of his Perſecutors, and his own Predictions were accompliſhed.*

But after all, the very Letter *of this* Prophecy, *according to this Gentleman's Account of it, was likewiſe fulfilled, and* Polycarp *was really* burnt alive, *notwithſtanding his Death was immediately wrought by the Stroke of the Executioner. For He ſeems to think that the Martyr really felt the Pains of the Fire, and, if He did, was not this literally a Completion of his*

Pre-

Prediction? " *If,*" *ſays this Writer,* " *the Compariſons uſed in the Relation of his Martyrdom, convey any Idea to us, the Place where the Martyr was, was very* hot, *and would naturally have* " *put an End to* " *his Life; and had it done ſo, his* Prophecy *had been* " *fulfilled.*" (*Pag.* 28.) *And ſo it was equally as the Caſe happened, eſpecially as it is here repreſented: For thoſe were not his very Words, that the* Flames ſhould put an End to his Life, *and it is not fair to vary the Expreſſion, when the Queſtion is, Whether the Prophecy was* literally *compleated. The Martyr foretold, that He ſhould be* burnt alive, *and this Gentleman thinks, that, by the Account given, He actually did* burn, *before the Executioner was ordered to ſtab Him; and if ſo, was not the very* Letter *of the Prophecy fulfilled? If this Gentleman inſiſts farther, that the Word* καταϰαυθῆναι *means, to be* conſumed by Fire, *then a farther Difficulty may be raiſed againſt Him, on his own Critical Method of adhering to the Letter; how Any one can be ſaid to be* conſumed by Fire *whilſt He is* Living. *If He ſays, that This is to be underſtood according to the cuſtomary Uſe of that Expreſſion, I ſhall agree with Him, but then I ſay, that ſuch Uſe of it is applicable to the Caſe of St.* Polycarp's *Martyrdom, as related by the Church of* Smyrna, *and that He was* burnt alive *in the ſame Senſe that Criminals uſually are, who ſuffer under a legal Sentence; whereas, in Strictneſs of Speech, if by being* burnt *we mean being* conſumed by Fire, *then All, who ſo are conſumed, are not* burnt alive, *but when They are* Dead. *Their Death, tho' occaſioned by the Flames, muſt happen before They are reduced to Aſhes; and thus We may go on criticiſing upon Words, till We may find a Contradiction in Terms in the Prophecy itſelf,* Δεῖ με ζῶντα ϰαταϰαυθῆναι, *whereas Every One plainly ſees the Meaning of it, and equally ſees the Completion of it in the Fate of the Martyr.*

And

And if the Centurion did immediately *light the Fire again, to conſume the Body, (as it is moſt probable that He did) then a mortal Wound given by ſtabbing, could not ſo inſtantly extinguiſh all Degrees and Symptoms of Life, as that He might not with great Propriety be ſaid to be* burnt alive, *at leaſt with as much Propriety as Other Sufferers by the ſame Kind of Death.*

In Anſwer to ſome Interrogatories not unſuitable to the Occaſion, This Gentleman goes on to obſerve that "*The* Power *of God is not the Point in Queſtion, but* "*the* Veracity *of* Witneſſes, *and if,*" *ſays He,* "*the* "*Circumſtances of their Narrations, are ſuch as make* "*the Thing* incredible *in itſelf, Every One has a* "*Right to* doubt *of, or to reject ſuch a Story.*" (P. 31, 32.) *This is true, but I do not ſee how it affects or weakens the Teſtimony of the Witneſſes in the Caſe before Us, or how it helps to clear up the main Point of the* Credibility of Miracles *in general. The true Point, which ſeems to want a clear State of it, is, What are Thoſe Circumſtances, which render a Narrative incredible in itſelf? No ſuch however appear in the Report of St.* Polycarp's *Martyrdom. Nay, That was attended with ſuch as may enable us* "*to argue* "*the* Probability *of a miraculous Interpoſition*" *in the Caſe.* "*That God could preſerve the Body of* Po-"lycarp *from the Flames, is no Doubt* poſſible;" *ſays this Gentleman;* (P. 30.) *and Dr.* M. *allows, that the Intent of Miraculous Powers, when they were granted, was to enable the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel more eaſily to over-rule the inveterate Prejudices both of* Jews *and* Gentiles, *and to bear up againſt the diſcouraging Shocks of popular Rage and Perſecution. Could there then be a more important Occaſion for the anſwering theſe Ends than the Martyrdom of ſo eminent and early a Teacher in the Chriſtian Church? Could a Miracle have been wrought at any Seaſon, which was more likely to have a good Effect both on the Friends*

and

and Enemies of the Cauſe of Chriſt? *We find by the Report of the former, that It had its proper Influence on them; and it was extremely well calculated at leaſt to work on Thoſe of the Latter, who were open to any Degree of Conviction.*

But We are now going to leave particular Accounts, and to come to the general Grounds of Credibility. "*What is uſually ſaid, ſays He, in the Behalf of the* "*Miracles done in the Ages of the beſt Authority ſince* "*the Apoſtolick Times, is, that They are related by* "*Men of Piety, of Abilities, and Integrity. Let This* "*have all the Weight it deſerves.*" (P. 35.) *This is as ample a Conceſſion as is deſired, will obviate the Objections brought againſt them by* Dr. M. *and will confirm their Teſtimony, if the Facts atteſted are not abſolutely* incredible *in Themſelves, and ſuch as no Piety, and Abilities, and Integrity can eſtabliſh. What are the Circumſtances, which yield ſuch an abſolute* Incredibility, *We are next to conſider.*

"*When a Fact, ſays this Author, is ſuch as We* "*never ſaw, nor is it poſſible for any Man by his or-* "*dinary Powers to do, the common Way of Reaſoning* "*is, firſt to try it by* Experience." *I confeſs I could not readily comprehend the Meaning of this, nor the Method of trying by* Experience *a Fact which we never ſaw, and which it is not poſſible for any Man by his ordinary Powers to do: But from what follows afterwards I collect the Meaning of it to be, that We muſt conſult the Experience of* Others *of former Times, as well as of the preſent, the Accounts of Hiſtory, and the Experience of Mankind in all Ages. In this Senſe This Method may be very proper, and will not turn out to the Diſadvantage of the Argument before Us. But I am not certain that This is the Senſe intended, becauſe when this Gentleman ſpeaks of trying ſuch a Fact by* Experience, *He adds,* "*if We find no Agreement to* "that, *then it is the common Way to ſee for a Rea-*

"*ſon,*

" ſon, or to make a Judgment upon Circumſtances, " from whence the Probability of ſuch a Miracle " may appear." I do not object to the Reaſonableneſs of this Method; but the preſcribing it in Caſe of the Facts not anſwering to the Trial of Experience, raiſes ſome Obſcurity. A Fact, which upon the very Suppoſition We never ſaw ourſelves, and which is beyond the ordinary Powers of Nature, cannot anſwer to our own Experience; and if it anſwer not to the Experience of any former Times, I know not what farther Circumſtances can make ſuch a Miracle probable. But if the Hiſtory of former Times aſſures Us, that Miracles have been wrought upon important Occaſions, it is then highly probable that they may be wrought again upon the like Exigencies; and this is a good Reaſon why We ſhould examine farther, whether there was any ſuch like probable Cauſe for a miraculous Interpoſition. Whether the Miracles reported are of the ſame ſpecifick Kind, with former ones, is not material; for conſidered as Miracles, as Events beyond the ordinary Powers of any Man, They may be ſaid to anſwer to Experience, if there are in Hiſtory ſuch well atteſted Accounts of Miracles as are allowed to deſerve Credit.

The general Rules, by which We determine the Probability of Facts, are next propoſed to our Conſideration; and the Firſt that is laid down is this, that " If We perceive a Thing impoſſible in its own Na- " ture, no Teſtimony, no Authority whatſoever is ſuf- " ficient to make it be believed to be really done." (P. 35.) This Rule is a moſt unqueſtionable one, but ſhould not ſome Caution be added under it concerning the Danger of our miſtaking in forming too haſtily ſuch a Judgment? How many real Truths have been rejected, without Examination, under the general Notion of their Impoſſibility, when the Error has lain only in the prejudiced Opinion of Thoſe to whom ſuch

Truths have been propoſed? Great Care ſhould therefore be taken to clear this Point of the real Impoſſibility *of the Thing reported, before it be ſet aſide on the Strength of this Rule: and I cannot think that the Inſtance given under this Head does at all contribute to illuſtrate the Subject.* "*When the People of* Egnatia, *it is* "*ſaid, pretended that They could at their Temple* burn "*and conſume* Incenſe without Fire, *it was eaſy to* "*perceive a Trick.*" *It might be ſo, but not, as far as I can ſee, for the Reaſon aſſigned under this Head. As the Occaſion might be inſignificant, and the Caſe was not ſubmitted to Examination, ſufficient Cauſe of* Suſpicion *appears; but how does it appear that the Thing was* impoſſible *in itſelf? Could We ſuppoſe that the* Cauſe *was worthy of a Divine Interpoſition, and that unanſwerable* Evidence *of ſuch an Interpoſition was offered, would it be beyond the Reach of Divine Power to conſume the* Incenſe without Fire? *Others will ſay, that it is impoſſible that Fuel, that a* Buſh *for Inſtance, ſhould not conſume, when a Fire flames within it; or that Human Bodies ſhould not burn when caſt into a* fiery Furnace; *but We Believers know better; and that when the Author of Nature has great Ends to ſerve by reverſing thoſe Laws which Himſelf appointed and fixed, He can give ſuch Direction to the Elementary Parts of Nature as to work Effects very different from their ſtated Influence, that in ſuch Caſes He can ſo order it, that the* Fire may have Power in the Water, forgetting his own Virtue, and that the Water may forget his own quenching Nature; or that on the other Hand the Flames may not waſte the Fleſh of the corruptible living Things, tho' They walked therein, neither melt the Icy Kind of Heavenly Meat that was of Nature apt to melt. *It muſt be as eaſy to the Author of Nature to* reverſe *his own Laws as to* continue *them, and therefore the Charge*

of

of Impoſſibility *will not hold merely from this Conſideration, that the Effect reported is different from or contrary to the natural Power and Influence of the Elements. Let the Thing reported be clearly ſhewn to be* impoſſible, *and it will readily be allowed, that This will preclude the Neceſſity of examining the Witneſſes.*

The ſecond Rule laid down is this, that "*If a* "*Thing be* poſſible, *and yet We find by Experience,* "*that it never, or* ſeldom *happens; or that We Our-* "*ſelves, or Others, have never, or ſcarce ever heard,* "*or found it to happen, We give our Aſſent to Wit-* "*neſſes, who atteſt ſuch a Thing, with* great Diffi-"culty." (*P.* 36.) *We are, with Reaſon, more careful in the Examination of ſuch Witneſſes, but yet if their Teſtimony can ſtand the Teſt, it may be admitted; and* Unuſual *Things have in ſeveral Inſtances been well atteſted and generally credited, notwithſtanding this Circumſtance of their happening but* ſeldom. *As* Tully *obſerves,* "*If This Circumſtance of Infrequency be* "*thought to conſtitute a Prodigy, then A Wiſe Man* "*is ſuch a Prodigy:*" *and yet there have been Thoſe, who have been univerſally eſteemed ſuch, notwithſtanding the Rareneſs of the Character. The Inſtances given under this Head are not of ſuch Things as have* ſeldom *happened, but have* never *happened; and therefore are no way parallel to the Caſe of* Miracles, *which this Author acknowleges to have been ſometimes wrought.*

The Third Rule is, "*If a Fact be extraordinary,* "*and what does not come within the Verge of our* "*Experience, or that of Others, who are contempo-* "*rary with Us; yet if We are able to ſee a* good "Reaſon, *why ſuch a* Fact *ſhould be done, We may* "*give good Credit to it, or if an extraordinary* "*Fact has been done, of the Truth of which we are* "*convinced; We may judge a* like Fact, *to be* pro-

bable, *if a* like Reaſon *appears.*" (*P.* 37.) *This Rule is both true and important, and will be found to be of great Uſe in the Application of it to the Miracles of the Primitive Church. The only* Caution, *which I ſhould have choſen to have added under this Head, is the expreſs Conceſſion of the next Propoſition.*

" *It does not hence follow, that God never does* " *interpoſe in a Manner extraordinary, where We* " *perhaps cannot ſee the Reaſon of his Interpoſi-* " *tion.*" *This is that great Point, which thoſe who argue on the Subject of Miracles, ſeem often to want to be reminded of; who place themſelves in the Seat of God, and judge as peremptorily of the* Occaſion *or the* Want *of it, as if They ſaw thro' the* Whole *of the Deſign with his unerring Judgment. It is added,* " *But the* Probability *of his not interpoſing in ſuch* " *a Manner is ſuch, that the Credit of Witneſſes* " *muſt be able to counterbalance the* Improbability *of* " *ſuch his Interpoſition, before We can aſſent to it.*" (*P.* 38.) *If the former Part of this Sentence be ſpoken of the* preſent Times, *I ſee not but that it may be admitted. The Probability that God will not interpoſe miraculouſly in* our Days *is ſo great, that the Credit of Witneſſes muſt be great indeed to counterbalance it. We have Reaſon to believe that ſuch miraculous Interpoſitions have long been diſcontinued; We have no Promiſe to cauſe Us to expect a Renewal of them, and We ſee no particular Exigencies which can require them. But this Argument concerning the* Improbability *of extraordinary Interpoſitions cannot ſtand as a general Prejudice and Preſumption againſt* all ſuch, *becauſe it depends upon Times and Circumſtances; and the whole Force of it lay on the other Side in thoſe Primitive Times, which We have now a View to. They had ſeen them in the Age immediately preceding; They had a Promiſe, not limited,*

for

for the Continuance of them, and They ſaw the Occaſion for them very fully continuing in their own Times. The Probability *therefore of God's continuing to interpoſe in an extraordinary Manner in that Age, is ſuch, that the Common Credit of Witneſſes might well be thought ſufficient to eſtabliſh it. The Uſe of this Obſervation, that* God may ſee Reaſons for interpoſing when We do not, *is chiefly applicable to* particular *Facts, for We ſee a* general *Reaſon for it, in thoſe Ages at leaſt: and it is chiefly ſerviceable in obviating Prejudices from firſt Appearances, and in preparing Us to look carefully into the whole Circumſtances of the Affair; for the Reaſons do often open to Us upon the* Enquiry, *which lay hid upon a tranſient View of the Caſe. It may farther be obſerved, that the Intent of Miracles beſtowed might be either for the ſole and immediate Uſe of thoſe Perſons and Times to whom They were granted; or, in Conjunction with this End, it might be for the farther Inſtruction and Almonition of* future Ages, *as an Evidence of ſome Truths in Favour and Support of which thoſe Miracles were wrought. In the former Caſe, if they are mentioned at all in Hiſtory, it is more than is neceſſary with Reſpect to Poſterity; and if they are not mentioned with all the Circumſtances, which might have ſupported their Truth, they may notwithſtanding be not the leſs genuine: and it is no inſuperable Objection, if they are well atteſted, to ſay that We do not ſee the Reaſon of them. But where They were intended as Objects of Faith to* After-Times, *there the Reaſons of them are diſcernible as well as the external Evidence of them inconteſtable; and None of them are preſſed upon the Belief of Poſterity, but where the Importance of the Occaſion was viſibly worthy of ſuch an extraordinary Interpoſition. If the Eſtabliſhment of the Truth of a* Divine Revelation *be not an End deſerving of the Uſe of ſuch Means, I know not what higher can be*

aſſigned; and This is the End aſſigned for their Continuance by Thoſe, who vindicate the Miracles of the Primitive Church.

From the Credibility of Things *We are very pertinently led to conſider that of the* Perſons: *and This is ſummed up in very few and very proper Words.* "*A Witneſs of any Fact muſt have Opportunity of* "examining *it: He muſt be* faithful *in relating it:* "*He muſt not be biaſſed by* Intereſt *or* Party: *He* "*muſt not be* credulous: *He muſt have Abilities to* "*ſearch out the Truth.*" (*P.* 38.) *Theſe are ſo truly the juſt and neceſſary Qualifications of Witneſſes, that where they concur, We cannot reaſonably refuſe our Aſſent; where Any of them are wanting, there will proportionably ariſe ſome Ground for ſuſpecting their Teſtimony. But They All concurred in the Caſe of the Primitive Apologiſts for Chriſtianity, as I have ſhewn in Anſwer to Mr.* Toll's *Compariſon of their Teſtimony with that of the preſent Advocates for the Continuance of Miracles in the* Romiſh *Church.*

It is rightly added, "*If a Man be an* Eye-Wit-"neſs *of any Fact, and has the Qualities juſt now men-*"*tioned, He deſerves the* firſt *Degree of Credit. If* "*a Perſon* relates *what an Eye-Witneſs tells Him, He* "*has a* leſſer *Degree of Credit due to Him. He ſtill* "*has a* lower *Degree, who relates only what* They "*ſay,* to whom *Eye-Witneſſes have made a Report.* "*And as for Thoſe, who collect from Others what They* "*have ſaid, and thus compile a Hiſtory of Facts, their* "*Credit depends upon their Judgment in rejecting or* "*relating, what has appeared to them to be true or* "*falſe.*" (*P.* 38.) *Theſe Rules appear to me to be ſo reaſonable and juſt, that the Application of them will clear up many Difficulties, and anſwer many Queſtions propoſed by this Author in the farther Purſuit of his Argument; particularly ſuch as relate to the* Criteria, *by which We may diſtinguiſh which of the Miracles related*

lated, are, and which are not to be credited. I will only obſerve at preſent, that according to this Account the Teſtimony of Thoſe Apologiſts, who wrote before the Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, deſerves the firſt Degree of Credit; for They ſpeak of Things of which Themſelves were Eye-Witneſſes. *The Manner in which They propoſe the Subject of Miracles to the Enquiry of their Adverſaries implies it; Their own Converſion by that Means demonſtrates it; and their Declarations often clearly avow it.* Origen, *One of the lateſt Apologiſts in that Interval, aſſerts it expreſsly in ſo many Words, inſiſts on the Conviction which had been extorted from Enemies by Means of ſuch Miracles, and ſays expreſsly,* Several of this Kind We ourſelves have ſeen. Orig. cont. Celſum. Lib. I. P. 362. Ben. Ed.

Again, " *Another Rule is aſſigned of great Impor-*
" *tance to form our Notions of* Credibility; *and that*
" *is, if* Enemies *as well as* Friends *concur in relating*
" *the ſame Fact.*" (P. 39.) *I may add, that if They do not deny the Fact, but attempt to evade it, This is likewiſe a Circumſtance of great Weight to eſtabliſh the Belief of it. It was not to be expected that They ſhould officiouſly and unneceſſarily relate the ſame Facts; but if, when preſſed with them, They did not deny them, This muſt be a ſtrong Confirmation of them; and ſo this Gentleman Himſelf acknowleges. Now This Advantage likewiſe holds with Reſpect to the Miracles of the Primitive Church as well as Thoſe of the Apoſtolical Age. It appears by thoſe* Apologiſts, *who ſet Themſelves to anſwer all Objections, that this of denying the Facts was not one; and it appears by ſome Teſtimonies of thoſe* Adverſaries *themſelves, that the Reality of them was admitted by the very Evaſions uſed to weaken the Force of the Argument ariſing from them.*

The following Pages carry Us back again where We first ſet out, and ſeem calculated to ſhew that no Teſtimony can be ſufficient to make a Report of the Interruption *or* Reverſal *of the Laws of Nature credible. I was in Hopes We had now gained theſe Preliminary Points,—that Miracles were* poſſible *in themſelves;—that they* have been wrought *on* important *Occaſions;—that it is credible that They* may be wrought *in other Inſtances on Occaſions of* equal Moment;—*that there* may be *Reaſons for them in the Counſels of Providence where We* may not *diſcern at leaſt all thoſe Reaſons; but that where We* do diſcern *them, there their Credibility is the better eſtabliſhed;—that where the Witneſſes are faithful, diſintereſted, cautious, wiſe, and have Opportunities of* Enquiry, *and even of* Ocular Demonſtration, *there the higheſt Credit is due to their Character; and laſtly, that where* Enemies *are driven to inconſiſtent Evaſions, there all reaſonable Occaſions of Doubt are cut off.—But after all theſe rational Grounds for forming a right Judgment on the Report of miraculous Events, a Suppoſition is again made of "a Fact related, improbable in itſelf, becauſe We "have never found in our own Experience, or in "that of Others, any ſimilar Inſtance; nor have ever "heard or ſeen any Man able to do, what is ſaid to be "done:—A* Suſpicion, *it is ſaid, preſently ariſes, "and lies againſt the Man who relates it, however "*faithful *the Relator may be, and even* credible *in "all other Inſtances. Nor will his Ability, or ſuppoſed Honeſty, or his being even an* Eye-Witneſs, *"totally remove the* Jealouſy *of Fraud, or Impoſition "or Trick;" and then the Reaſon follows, "Becauſe "the* Improbability *of the Thing outweighs any Aſſurance that We can have of* Perſonal Qualities." (*P.* 39, 40.) *If ſo, were not thoſe Obſervations on the Qualifications of Witneſſes unneceſſary and ſuperfluous, ſince, according to this Account, no Teſtimony can*

be

be ſufficient to prove a Miracle? For it is to be obſerved, that the Improbability *of the Fact related is not here charged on the Triflingneſs of the Occaſion, or on the Want of Examination into it, or on any appendant Circumſtances which might ſeem unlikely, but merely on its not anſwering to* our own *or* others Experience *in any ſimilar Inſtance, or to what we have heard or ſeen Any Man able to do, that is, merely to its being* miraculous: *And This* Improbability *is ſaid to outweigh any Aſſurance that We can have of* Perſonal Qualities. *We are then led again to the Mention of Miracles upon Tradition by* Heathen *Hiſtorians; where the Teſtimony of* Eye-Witneſſes *is not pretended; where no* End *or* Uſe *of them was aſſigned; where no* Examination *of them was offered or admitted; all which may ſecurely be rejected without ſo dangerous a Propoſition as this, that "the* Improbability *of a "Miracle outweighs any Aſſurance that We can have "of the* Perſonal Qualities *of the Witneſſes." Whereas ſo great an* Improbability *as this muſt depend* not *on the Nature of a* Miracle *as* ſuch, *but on the Circumſtances attending it, which therefore ought to be ſpecified. It is improbable that a Miracle ſhould be worked for* no *End, or for a* trifling *one; but it is not* improbable *that it ſhould be worked on a weighty Occaſion, nor is it improbable that We may upon Enquiry diſcern ſuch Occaſion for it; and therefore its not anſwering hitherto to our own or others Experience, or to what We have ſeen or heard, is no inſuperable Objection againſt it; but if it be offered to our Enquiry, if it be found to anſwer ſome great End, if the Witneſſes were Many, and Honeſt and Prudent; and had all the other Qualifications before ſpoken of, ſuch a Fact, thus atteſted, tho' it be* miraculous, *may well deſerve and expect Credit.*

And indeed, notwithſtanding the Want of Caution and Limitation in the general Propoſition here referred

to, this Gentleman himſelf thought fit, in repeating the Subſtance of it, and laying down this as the Rule of diſtinguiſhing Truth from Falſhood, to "*conſider the Nature of the Thing told, to admit what is agreeable* "*to* Experience, *and to reject what is contrary to* "*it,*" *thought fit to add on the latter Caſe,* "*unleſs* "*there has been ſuch Examination, as precludes all* "*Doubt.*" *(P. 42.) Without Doubt This is a very neceſſary Article; and This, which is thrown in in an incidental Clauſe, was deſerving of the firſt and principal Conſideration. Should not the Rule therefore have been,* "*Conſider the* Nature *and the* Circum-"ſtances *of the Thing told;*" *for if the Nature of it only as a* Miracle, *and as ſuch, not anſwering to Experience, be ſufficient to deſtroy its Credit, to what Purpoſe can be any After-Examination? Or how can it poſſibly prove ſuch as to preclude all Doubt concerning the Reality of the Fact reported? I ſhould chuſe therefore on ſuch an Occaſion to ſay, Conſider not only the* Nature *of the Thing told, but Conſider the* Circumſtances *of it, and of Him or of thoſe who relate it. Conſider whether the Miracle reported was wrought on any ſuch* Occaſion *as thoſe were, which we believe Providence has heretofore wrought; Conſider what* Opportunities *the Relators had to judge of them; whether They were witneſſes to them Themſelves; whether They were done in their Times; whether They were then recorded when all might know the Truth or Falſhood of them. Conſider the* Manner *in which They are ſaid to have been wrought; whether They were done in private; whether They were offered to Examination, eſpecially to Thoſe who were moſt concerned to diſprove them. Conſider the* Connection *of them, whether the Miracles reported by different Perſons have any Relation to Each Other; whether They were wrought in the ſame Cauſe; whether there was any profeſſed End for which they were wrought;*

whether

whether that End was, according to the Rule of Analogy, *ſuitable to the other Diſpenſations of Providence, and worthy of ſuch an Interpoſition. Conſider the* Effect, *whether the Cauſe proſpered in Favour of which They were wrought; whether the Witneſſes were always Favourers of that Cauſe; whether They were brought over to it by unavoidable Conviction wrought by the ſame Means; whether They openly propoſed the ſame Means of Conviction to Others. Conſider laſtly the* View *of Thoſe who make the Report, whether They have any temporal Intereſt to ſerve by propagating the Belief of them; whether They have any Principles which might excuſe their Promoting a Falſhood for the Service of ſome ſuppoſed good End; or whether it appears that their Conſcience and their Security would both have obliged them to have told the Truth, and detected the Pretence if it had been groundleſs. If, upon a View of all theſe Circumſtances, there ariſes greater Cauſe of* Suſpicion *than Ground of* Confirmation, *the Report will be rejected; but the Reaſon will be, not from conſidering merely the* Nature *of the Thing told, its not anſwering to our* Experience, *or its being contrary to the ſtated Courſe of Nature, but from its* Failure *in ſome* other *Particular neceſſary to ſupport its Credibility.*

This Gentleman goes on to take Notice of what is uſually obſerved in Favour of Miracles, "*that an* "*Interpoſition of* Providence *is ſuppoſed in ſuch Caſes,* "*and thereby a* Power *is acknowledged* ſufficient *to* "*bring about whatever is* poſſible;" *(P. 43) and his Remarks on this are of Force againſt ſuch, if ſuch there are, as contend that the Report of a Miracle ſhould be admitted, becauſe it* may *be true. But amongſt the moſt ſanguine Advocates for this Cauſe, I have not met with Any ſo bold and ſo weak as to reſt the Point on that Iſſue, and to urge the* Truth *of any Miracle merely from the* Poſſibility *of it.*

The

The obſervation referred to is intended as an Anſwer to the Objection of Thoſe, who inſiſt on the Incredibility *of Miracles as ſuch, and ſo far it is of Force, that the Interpoſition of Providence being ſuppoſed in ſuch Caſes, there is* Power ſufficient *to accompliſh the End, if in other Reſpects it be Credible. No One carries the Force of it farther, or pleads for the Belief of Miracles, merely becauſe God* may *Work them; but every reaſonable Believer will join with this Gentleman in deſiring a Critical Enquiry into the Truth of them. They may not perhaps ſo readily join with Him in another Part of the ſame Sentence, that "if "We do not ever ſee a miraculous Interpoſition,—We "argue from the* Improbability *of the Thing as "much out-weighing the Credit of the Author;" (P. 44) becauſe This muſt depend on a critical Enquiry into the Credit of the Author; if That will ſtand the Teſt, and other Circumſtances appear worthy of ſuch an Interpoſition, the* Improbability *ariſing merely from our never having ſeen a Miracle, will not outweigh the well-ſupported Teſtimony of a Competent Witneſs. I cannot help obſerving in this Place, that this Gentleman hitherto generally Speaks of* one *only Witneſs as atteſting ſuch miraculous Events, but but tho' a Miracle ſo atteſted may be true, yet None that were intended for the Belief of Poſterity, were ever, I believe, left to reſt on a ſingle Teſtimony.*

It has been ſuggeſted, ſays this Gentleman, "that "it is not neceſſary to believe every particular *miraculous Story which occurs either among the Ancients "or Moderns." (P. 45.) This ſeems to me a very reaſonable Suggeſtion, and it was offered by me as well as by Others. "But then, ſays he, if Miracles are "uniformly related, as done in different Ages, and "different Places; and This for a long Continuance; "and Hiſtorians, and other good Men, concur in "the Report of ſuch Facts; what Credit is due to*

"*ſuch*

" *ſuch a Concurrence of Atteſtations?*" *Some farther Queſtions ſhould, I think, be aſked, before a deciſive Anſwer be given to this. Such a Concurrence is certainly a Preſumption in their Favour; and if the Facts atteſted were ſuch as fell within their own Knowlege, if they had particular* Opportunities *of looking into them, and particular* Motives *to induce them to tell the Truth, if the Claims to ſuch Powers, and the Evidence of ſuch Facts, were made* publick *at the Time, and offered freely to* All Enquirers, *then, I think, the higheſt Degree of Credit will be due to ſuch concurring Atteſtations, and they cannot be evaded but by ſuch Exceptions as would hold equally againſt the Belief of* all *miraculous Interpoſitions. But if the farther Particulars now enquired prove unfavourable and ſuſpicious, if the Miracles reported were done only among* themſelves, *and calculated only to anſwer ſome* private Ends, *if they afforded ſome Temptations to them to* prevaricate, *and at the ſame Time ſome Motives to* excuſe *the Crime and* quiet *their Conſciences in ſuch Prevarication, and principally if they were not offered to the* free Examination *of thoſe, for whoſe Conviction They were pretended to be wrought; in the Report of Miracles thus circumſtanced, the mere Concurrence of many Witneſſes in different Times and Places will not be ſufficient to ſupport their Credit.*

But then, " *Muſt we not look on ſuch Witneſſes* " *as* Fools *or* Knaves, *All to concur without Con-* " *tradiction, and acting as in* Concert *to propagate* " *what is falſe.*" *(P.* 46.) *This likewiſe I had urged as an abſurd Conſequence of rejecting the concurring Teſtimony of the Primitive Fathers, in their Report of Miracles; and the Charge will hold with Reſpect to Others, juſt ſo far as their Circumſtances are parallel to theirs, and no farther.*

But

But this Gentleman attempts to ſet aſide the Force of both the forementioned Suggeſtions in the following Manner. " *Let it be obſerved, ſays he,* Firſt, *when it is* " *thought right to give up particular miraculous Stories,* " *ſome Teſt or other muſt be given, by which One* " *may judge, which are the defenſible ones, and which* " *the indefenſible.*" (*P.* 46) *Such has, I think, been given, by which We may form a reaſonable tho' not an infallible Judgment, and ſuch as, I believe, moſt reaſonable Believers do uſually judge by. But this Author goes on,* " *Are the* Popiſh *Miracles of any Century, ſince the* Sixth " *or* Seventh, *to have Credit?*" *I think not, for the Reaſons here already intimated, and aſſigned more at large in the enſuing Reply. Well then, ſays he,* " *If the Anſwer be in the Negative, I ſhall Aſk,* " *Are St.* Martin's? *Are* Symeon Stylites's? *Are* " Hilarion's? *Are St.* Anthony's?" *Suppoſe now, We ſhould not be diſpoſed with Mr.* Toll, *to reject all theſe together in a Bundle, but ſhould ſay that of theſe ſome are more, ſome leſs probable; and that if Thoſe Miracles, which are ſaid to be wrought in Publick and upon Occaſions which appear worthy of them, were known to be true, This may eaſily account for the Reception of other Stories which were told of them, and which never underwent any Examination; Where would be the Abſurdity of ſuch a Suppoſition, or what Advantage could it give to* Popery *or any other Superſtition? But granting that all the Miracles of theſe reputed Saints are to be given up as forged and groundleſs, What would be the Conſequence? If theſe are* " *not to be credited,*" *ſays this Gentleman,* " *tho'* " *Hiſtorians concur without Contradiction in them,* " *What is the Rule by which We can judge, which* " *are to be credited, or which not?*" *I anſwer in the firſt Place, that this Caſe, which is ſtated as if it was parallel with the Atteſtation of thoſe early Miracles, which were wrought before the Civil Eſtabliſhment of*

Chriſtianity,

Chriſtianity, is very different from it. The Uſe intended from this Parallel is eaſy enough to be diſtinguiſhed, and will be ſufficiently obviated by obſerving, that theſe Reports ſtand upon very different Foundations. That Miracles continued in the Primitive Church, We have the concurring Teſtimony of All, *who had any Occaſion to mention the* Evidence *of Chriſtianity, or to write in Defence of it; and incidentally, of Some who were only enforcing the* Practice *of it: nay even of Some who were* Enemies *to it. But of the Miracles of the Saints now ſpoken of, We have the Teſtimony only of ſome particular Perſons, of the Writers of their Lives; and as this Writer obſerves in a particular Inſtance, "there plainly runs "thro' all thoſe Diſcourſes ſuch an Affection for their "particular Saint, and for all his Sayings, as well "as for all his Actions, as ſhews them to have had "the higheſt Eſteem for his Perſon. And They re-"late every Thing in ſuch a Manner as manifeſts al-"moſt an implicit Faith in Him, and in whatever "He ſaid." (P. 22.) This Remark is applicable to the greater Part of theſe Writers of Lives; and This may, without a Miracle, account for the Exaggerations and Additions, which Thoſe may, without Inconſiſtency, acknowledge, who ſuppoſe there was ſome Truth in the Foundation. But ſince theſe Lives depend often on* ſingle *Teſtimonies, and at the beſt on the Reports of particular* Friends, *in what Senſe can it be ſaid, that "Hiſtorians concur in them without Contradiction, as if this Caſe was parallel to the Report of miraculous Powers in the earlieſt Ages? No Hiſtorians mention theſe latter but their own Biographers; There is no Concurrence of Teſtimony as in the former Caſe, Neither would Dr.* M. *Himſelf allow, that there was no Contradiction to theſe in Hiſtory; for he urges the expreſs Mention of the Ceaſing of Miracles and the Reaſons aſſigned for it, as a ſure*

Argu-

Argument againſt the Continuance of Any at that Time: And it is certainly a good Argument againſt the Belief of their being ſo frequent *as theſe Writers of Lives report. But it is to be remembered as a very conſiderable Diſtinction, that* before *the Civil Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, when the Apologiſts were ſo frequent in their Pretenſions to Miraculous Gifts, there was no One Writer amongſt them, who diſclaimed them; not a ſingle Chriſtian, who mentions the Ceaſing of Miracles, or who pretends to aſſert that Fact, or to aſſign the Reaſon of it.*

This Gentleman goes on, " *If it be* Age *alone that* " *gives the Sanction, Care muſt be taken leſt Any One* " *taking a little and a little from it, ſhould artfully* " *take away the Authority of the Whole.*" *I would aſk again, againſt Whom this Remark is intended. Where are the Advocates for the Belief of the Miracles in the Primitive Church, who have pleaded as if* " *it were* Age *alone that gives the Sanction,*" *againſt Whom this artful Method might be employed? Was the Streſs ever laid merely upon the* Antiquity *of them? Have not the Reaſons always been aſſigned, why Miracles were more credible in the earlieſt Ages, particularly in thoſe* preceding *the Converſion of the Governors of the World? Was there not very evidently more Occaſion for Miracles at that Time? Were They not then more openly offered to Examination? And were not the Witneſſes in that Age more diſintereſted and unexceptionable? If Theſe Circumſtances, often ſpecified, could be diſproved, it might be Somewhat to the Purpoſe; but I know not why We are amuſed with Anſwers to Arguments which never were offered; or why a Gentleman ſo capable of writing pertinently to the Queſtion, ſhould go from it to combat imaginary Notions.*

He adds, " *Secondly, Admitting it to be true, that* " *Men concur in Atteſtations of Miraculous Facts; yet* " *it is hard to repreſent them* all *as* Fools *or* Knaves, *even*

" *even ſuppoſing the Facts to be falſe.*" *I anſwer again. This depends entirely on the Circumſtances of the Caſe. If the Facts were ſuch as happened frequently, and All had publick Opportunities of examining; if they were ſuch, as in various Inſtances fell under their own Senſes, which common Senſe could not fail to judge of; if they were ſuch as that their preſent and future Welfare much depended on their Judgment of the Reality of them; if in ſuch repeated, obvious, important Facts, there was ſo much Unanimity from many Witneſſes, in different Times and Places, and yet the Facts are ſuppoſed to be groundleſs, I ſee not how the Witneſſes can be acquitted both of* Folly *and* Knavery *in ſuch their concurring Teſtimony of a Falſhood. The Circumſtances here ſuggeſted in their Vindication, of their* " *atteſting* " *upon Report,*" *their* " *taking for granted what* " *They did not examine*" *or their* " *acting upon Pre-* " *judices, and imagining a Continuance of real Powers,* " *in Oppoſition to the ſuppoſed Powers of Magic, or* " *any ſuch Illuſion,*" (P. 47.) *Theſe can have no Room in the Caſe now ſtated, where They might have been* Eye-Witneſſes, *and aſſert that they were, where there was no Room for ſuch blinding Prejudices, and wild Imaginations; where a juſt Examination could not but open the Truth; where* Folly *muſt be the Charge, if They all uniformly neglected ſuch Examination as muſt afford them a right Information, and* Knavery, *if They continued to atteſt a Falſhood, which an Enquiry muſt have ſhewn to be ſuch.*

The Mention of the Popiſh *Miracles is here again introduced. It is ſaid that in this Caſe,* " *the* Con- " currence of Atteſtations *continues to this Day; and* " *whatever fully accounts for this Concurrence now,* " *may poſſibly help Us to account for the like Concur-* " *rence in Times paſt.*" (P. 47.) *I think I have ſhewn the contrary; that the ſame Conſiderations cannot poſſibly account for both Caſes; but that the Reaſons,*

which induce the Papiſts *to carry on this Fraud, could not by any Means hold with Reſpect to the* Primitive Fathers. *The Remark, which this Gentleman Himſelf makes after the Repetition of ſome more* Popiſh *Stories, is ſufficient to ſhew the Diſparity of theſe Caſes, and is of great Uſe in forming a Judgment of all Caſes, where the Belief of Miracles is propoſed to our Aſſent.* " *Such Facts as theſe ſhould be allowed to be* " examined *by* Enemies *as well as* Friends, *and by* " *that Means freed from Doubt; for the mere Atteſ-* " *tations of intereſted Parties are not ſufficient to re-* " *move Suſpicions, or to gain Credit to what is impro-* " *bable in the Nature of the Thing.*" (*P.* 50.)

The next Remark, which is offered to Us, is on the Manner in which, or Inſtrument by which Miracles are reported to have been done. Theſe have ſometimes been objected to as trifling and ridiculous, and a very competent Anſwer has often been given, that if they are credible in other Reſpects, They cannot be incredible merely in this, becauſe herein They are ſimilar *to ſeveral Inſtances recorded in the Scriptures, which are allowed to have been ſufficiently atteſted: and if the Atteſtation be ſufficient, the Power of God is the more conſpicuous in the Meanneſs of the Inſtruments by which He thinks fit to work. But, ſays this Gentleman,* " *tho' the modern Miracles may be* like *the ſcriptural* " *ones in many Circumſtances, yet That is by no Means* " *an Evidence of Truth.*" (*P.* 52.) *Was it ever pretended that it was? Where are the Writers, who have argued the Truth of a Fact merely from its being ſaid to be brought about in the ſame Manner as ſome confeſſed Miracles were, which are recorded in the Sacred Writings? The* Teſtimony *of the* Witneſſes *is always referred to as the* poſitive Evidence *of the Fact, and this Conſideration is introduced only to take off the Force of the* Objection *from the particular* Manner *in which it is ſaid to be done; and to ſhew*

that

that the Thing is capable of being proved, if the Witneſſes upon Examination are found to be both duly informed, and honeſtly diſpoſed. That indeed is a very diſtinct Queſtion, but if their Teſtimony can ſtand the Teſt, then any Exception againſt a Form, *which is thought mean or ſtrange, is ſufficiently removed, if it anſwers to the Method heretofore uſed by Providence in the Operation of Miraculous Works. If the Exception would have been as ſtrong againſt the Manner or Inſtruments of Miracles recorded in the* Sacred Hiſtory, *and yet is allowed to be of no Force againſt them, then neither is it of Force againſt Others that are well atteſted. This is a Way of Reaſoning that muſt be concluſive to all* Believers, *and the Uſe of it is this, and no other, than to ſhew that the Fact is not* incredible *in itſelf, but that it* may *admit of Proof. The Nature and Weight of the Proof ought to be examined, and muſt be determined by other Conſiderations.*

"*The material Point,*" *continues this Gentleman,* "*is, 1ſt, What Weight ought to be allowed to Teſti-*
"*mony in Caſes of miraculous Reports? And,* 2dly,
"*When Miracles are related by different Writers,*
"e. g. *by* Sulpitius Severus, *and by a* Sacred Wri-
"ter, *why is the One defended at the ſame Time that*
"*the Other is rejected? Why ſhould not both be con-*
"*demned as fictitious, or Both be admitted as true*
"*Facts, ſince Both depend upon Evidence to Us,*
"at this Diſtance, *well vouched by the beſt Human*
"*Authority?*" (*P.* 53.) *This is putting the Queſtion in a very ſtrong Light, and reminds me of a very proper Caution added afterwards in this very Treatiſe, that* "*it behoves all, who regard the Religion of*
"*Chriſt, ſo to treat of the Miracles of other Times,*
"*as not to throw inſuperable Difficulties on thoſe of*
"*our Saviour and his Apoſtles.*" *Some will be apprehenſive, that This is the Caſe here, and that the Objection is here both clearer and ſtronger than the Solu-*

tion. The Diſtinction in Favour of the Goſpel-Miracles is referred to its proper Head, the 2d previous Queſtion: *But I ſhould have been glad to have ſeen a clearer State, and more explicit Determination of the firſt Point in this its proper Place, namely,* "*What* "*Weight ought to be allowed to Teſtimony in Caſes of* "*Miraculous Reports?*" *The whole Tenour of the Reflections hitherto offered by this Gentleman ſeems to be to ſhew, that the* Improbability *of a Miracle is ſo great as to outweigh any Aſſurance which We can have of the* Perſonal Qualifications *of Witneſſes; and tho' We have now and then been favoured with a Conceſſion to the contrary, yet this Obſervation has ſoon been repeated, and our Memories have been refreſhed with the* Incredibility *of every Fact, which does not anſwer to* Experience, *or which is contrary to the* Courſe of Nature. *Every Rule, which We might hope to take Advantage of for eſtabliſhing the Belief of any Miracles propoſed to Us, is weakened by ſome Clauſe, which defeats the Effect; and the Reſult of this whole Diſſertation, as ſummed up by the Author of it, is this, that* "*He has ſhewn, that Human Teſtimony, how much* "*ſoever it is valued in* common *Caſes, has not an* "*equal Deference paid to it in miraculous ones.*" (*P.* 59.) *Should He not have diſtinguiſhed, whether He here ſpoke of the* Fact, *or of the* Reaſon *of the Thing? His Argument muſt ſuppoſe Him to ſpeak of the latter, that Men judge rightly in rejecting all Human Teſtimony in miraculous Reports; and then a Concern for the Credit of the Goſpel might well ſuggeſt the Enquiries following that Obſervation. But then He ought likewiſe to be reminded of the Conceſſions extorted from Him by Truth, that where extraordinary Reaſons appear for extraordinary Interpoſitions; or where a like Reaſon appears for a Fact like to an extraordinary one, of the Truth of which We are already convinced; and where theſe are eſtabliſhed by Witneſſes unexceptionable*

both

both for their Abilities and Integrity, with Offers of Free Inquiry *to all Oppoſers, there ſuch Facts may become credible; when theſe Conceſſions are thus collected and applied, tho' the* Incredibility *of a Miracle in itſelf be repeated to Us a thouſand Times, yet in any Senſe of it that is conſiſtent with thoſe acknowleged Principles, We ſhall find no Cauſe to be under any Apprehenſions for the Authority of the Miracles wrought in the Apoſtles Times, or in thoſe immediately ſucceeding them.*

But before He concludes this firſt previous Queſtion, *He ſays, that* " *there is another Caſe, which muſt* " *not be paſſed over in Silence. We may eaſily ſuppoſe it poſſible to have a* Difference *in the Narration of the ſame Fact: That One may relate it ſo,* " *as to make it all* miraculous; *and Another may* " *ſpeak of it in ſuch a Manner, as not to imply* any " Miracle *at all. Which Account then ought We to* " *give the Preference to? Or what are We to believe? Or how are We to aſſent?*" (*P.* 54.) *This was introduced only to invalidate the Account of a Miracle ſaid to be wrought in a later Age than Thoſe which I am concerned with. The Caſe has many Years ago been conſidered at large by a much abler Hand, and the Objections now offered againſt it been obviated; but whether upon the whole it be thought to deſerve Credit or not, it affects not the Queſtion of the Continuance of Miracles till the Civil Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity. As far as the Caſe now ſtated by this Gentleman, as worthy of ſpecial Notice, can be thought to relate to the Grounds of the* Credibility of Miracles *in general, I anſwer that it is a clear and acknowleged Rule, that all doubtful Paſſages and Teſtimonies are to be explained by thoſe which are more plain and full, and are of equal Authority. If Two good Witneſſes report the ſame Caſe, the One in ſo ambiguous a Manner as that it may be interpreted either of a* natural *or* ſuper-

natural *Event*, *the Other in clear and expreſs Terms*, *incapable of Evaſion*, *confining the Account directly to a* Miracle, *if there be no Exception to Either of their Characters*, *there can be no Doubt but that We muſt explain the One Teſtimony conſiſtently with the Other*, *and underſtand the Caſe of a* miraculous *Event. This is certainly the Rule in all like Caſes of Doubt*, *but this Gentleman thinks that it varies here.* "*In two dif-*
"*ferent Relations*, *ſays He*, *of the ſame Fact*, *Pro-*
"*bability will always be on the Side of Reaſon and*
"*Experience rather than on the Side of the Mi-*
"*racle.*" (*P.* 55.) *This again will depend entirely on the Circumſtances of the Caſe. The Reaſon of the Thing and the Experience of former Times may perhaps ſhew*, *that the Occaſion was important and worthy of a Divine Interpoſition*, *and then the Probability will lie rather on the Side of the Miracle. If the Cauſe*, *after the ſtricteſt Examination*, *appears to be* trifling, *the Objection will lie on that Conſideration*, *and not merely on the* Incredibility *of a Miracle in itſelf*, *as is continually inſinuated.*

The Second Previous Queſtion *comes next under Conſideration*, "*Upon what Grounds the Miracles of*
"*the Goſpel in particular are credible?*" *The Difficulties thrown upon the Belief of all Miracles under the former Queſtion*, *made it highly neceſſary to ſecure the Faith of Chriſtians*, *and the Authority of the New Teſtament*, *by ſhewing ſome Diſtinction in Favour of the Miracles there recorded: and here this Author has acted a much better Part than Dr.* M. *did*, *and has endeavoured to point out a peculiar Circumſtance as eſtabliſhing the Belief of the Scriptural Miracles*, *tho' all others ſhould be given up as groundleſs.*

His own Account of the Difficulty ariſing from his former State of the Caſe is as follows. "*It appears*,
"*ſays He*, *by what has been ſaid*, *that in order to*
"*make the Evidence for any Fact* in general credi-
"ble,

" ble, *there muſt not only be the* Relator *worthy of*
" *Credit, but the* Thing, *that He relates, muſt be*
" *credible. If a* Perſon *be a Man of the greateſt*
" *Abilities, and of Integrity indiſputable, yet if the*
" Thing *reported be in its own Nature* incredible,
" *either becauſe it is impoſſible in itſelf, or becauſe it*
" *is confirmed by no Experience of our own, or of that*
" *of others; it is in Courſe either liable to be ſuſ-*
" *pected, or perhaps to be entirely rejected. Upon*
" *what Foundation then does the Credit of our Sa-*
" *viour's Miracles ſtand; ſince they are improbable in*
" *their own Nature, as being Facts beyond the Power*
" *of any Mortal to do, and are ſimilar to Nothing*
" *that our common Experience teaches Us?*" *This,*
" *He ſays, was the Subject which He had principally*
" *in View.*" (*P.* 59, 60.) *The Variety and the Reality of our Saviour's miraculous Works are then ſet forth in a very ſtrong, convincing and comprehenſive Method; but ſtill this Objection remains againſt them in its full Force, that they are not ſimilar to Any Thing that our common Experience teaches Us. But* " *be-*
" *fore this Objection is removed, and it is ſhewn, that*
" *the Miracles of the Goſpel are* credible *in them-*
" *ſelves, it is thought proper to enquire what Evi-*
" *dence they afford of the* Truth *of our Saviour's*
" *being the Chriſt.*" *The Reaſon aſſigned for this is,* " *that Miracles, conſidered as ſuch, are no Proof*
" *of any Thing, but of* extraordinary Power; *or*
" *that the Perſon who does them, is aſſiſted by ſome*
" *Being ſuperior to Man. But* Power, *ſays He, does*
" *not imply* Truth; *nor does it follow, that He who*
" *can exert the greateſt Strength, will therefore exert*
" *the greateſt Veracity.*" (*P.* 62.) *This is the Language and Argument of Thoſe, who have Deſigns in View very different from the Gentleman from whom I have copied them, who would abhor the Uſe to which this Method of Reaſoning has been applied. And I ap-*

prehend that it is not only groundleſs in itſelf, but that it has carried Him into a more tedious, more confined, and leſs ſatisfactory Method of confirming our Saviour's Authority, than might have been deduced immediately from the Conſideration of his Miracles. *That Argument is more direct, more perſpicuous, more univerſally convincing, than ſuch a Connection as muſt ſuppoſe Men to believe the Old Teſtament before They can be brought thereby to believe the New. But, ſays this Gentleman, "Miracles, conſidered as ſuch, are no "Proof of any Thing but of* extraordinary Power; *"or that the Perſon, who does them, is aſſiſted by "ſome Being ſuperior to Man." This* But *which He makes ſo light of, is all that is wanting to form a Demonſtrative Argument in Favour of Pretenſions ſo ſupported. The Acknowledgment of it as an undoubted Evidence of the Aſſiſtance of ſome ſuperior Being will end in a clear Proof of the Heavenly Authority of thoſe who offered* Miracles *to the World. No, it is ſaid, "*Power *does not imply* Truth; *nor does it follow, "that He who can exert the greateſt Strength, will "therefore exert the greateſt Veracity." The contrary Propoſition ſeems to me demonſtrable from the Moral Attributes of the Deity, and very clearly to be made good from the State of the Queſtion as propoſed by this Author Himſelf. For the Caſe in Point is that of* ſupernatural *Power, the Aſſiſtance of ſome Being ſuperior to Man in the extraordinary Operation. Nay ſome Kind of* Competition *is implied in the Expreſſion of their being* able to exert the greateſt Strength, *who are ſuppoſed* not to exert the greateſt Veracity. *Now This appears to me to be inconſiſtent with the Belief of the Divine Wiſdom and Providence. For if miraculous Power without any Oppoſition, or a greater Degree of it upon a Competition, may be exerted in Favour of a Falſhood, then either there muſt be ſome Being independent of God, who can thus*

ſupport

ſupport ſuch a Cauſe; or God Himſelf muſt be ſuppoſed to permit ſuch a Power, ſuch a ſuperior Power, to be exerted for the Confirmation of feigned Pretenſions to the unavoidable Deception of his Creatures. Now Either of theſe Suppoſitions are too hard for my Faith, and much more incredible *than many Articles which are daily charged with that Imputation. But if there be no Being equal to, or independent of the Author of Nature; if the Author of Nature be too wiſe, and good, and holy, to empower any other Beings to work Miracles on Purpoſe to deceive Us; then an Acknowledgment of our Saviour's miraculous Works is a direct and immediate Proof of his Pretenſions without farther Argumentation. If the Origin of all* Power *be likewiſe the Origin of all* Truth, *how can it be ſaid, that the former does not imply the latter, when We are ſpeaking of ſupernatural Interpoſitions? If the Streſs be laid on conſidering* Miracles *as* ſuch, *that is, out of all Connection with the Pretenſions of Thoſe who are ſaid to be endued with them, and in this Light merely they are ſaid to be no Proof of any Thing but of* extraordinary Power, *then We may anſwer that this is an imaginary Caſe, which does not correſpond with Fact, and can be of no Uſe in Speculation.* Miracles *never were, nor ever were pretended to be wrought for the Amuſement of Mankind, merely to exhibit extraordinary Power; and therefore why ſhould We ſtate Caſes which never exiſted, and which it is ſo eaſy to foreſee will be made an ill Uſe of, and perverted to the Prejudice of real Facts? A* ſtanding Power *of working Miracles never was claimed but in Support of ſome Pretenſions, and if thoſe Miracles were real, the Truth of thoſe Pretenſions will be eſtabliſhed. It is allowed that they are a Proof of the Aſſiſtance of ſome Being ſuperior to Man, and according as that Being is ſuppoſed to be* Good *or* Bad, *the End may be ſuppoſed to be ſo too, which is ſerved by it; but a Superior Being*

of

of either Character cannot be thought to lend ſuch ſupernatural Aſſiſtance merely for the Diverſion of Human Creatures. Miracles *then prove ſomething more than* extraordinary Power; *they prove the Interpoſition of a ſuperior intelligent Agent, who muſt be ſuppoſed to act on ſome Occaſion or other, ſuitable to his own Nature, and worthy his extraordinary Interpoſition. And then the plain Queſtion will be, whether the* God of Truth *would lend his ſupernatural Power to ſupport a* Lie, *or permit evil Beings to ſupport it in that Manner, without reſtraining them in the Exerciſe of their Power, or overbalancing it by the Diſplay of his ſuperior Might. Now We Believers know from* Revelation, *what we might have preſuppoſed by the Light of our own* Reaſon, *that in Fact God Almighty never did ſuffer Evil Spirits to impoſe upon Mankind by real Miracles, at leaſt not without ſuch a Manifeſtation of his greater Glory, as might be a very ſufficient Guard againſt the Deluſion. It is not neceſſary on this Occaſion to determine whether the* Egyptian *Sorcerers acted truly by the Aſſiſtance of a ſuperior Being, or whether They only counterfeited Appearances, and played their Tricks by* Legerdemain. *On the latter Suppoſition their Deluſions were* detected *by the farther and greater Inſtances of real Miracles offered by* Moſes, *which could not be counterfeited: On the former, the Power of thoſe Evil Spirits, by whoſe Aſſiſtance They acted, was ſhewn to be* limited *and* derived, *and unable to withſtand, when the* Finger of God *interpoſed in Support of his own Servants. Either Way the Connection of* Power *and* Truth *was very properly eſtabliſhed, and ſufficient Remedy was offered againſt all Pretenſions to Miracles in Favour of Fraud and Impoſture.*

This Connection is ſo obvious, that I do not ſee the Neceſſity of proceeding in ſo remote and diſtant a Method as this Gentleman does in his Enquiry what Evi-

dence

dence Miracles afford of the Truth *of our Saviour's Miſſion. His Reflections are juſt and well adapted for the Conviction of a* Jew, *but, according to his own Scheme, they are loaded with Difficulties, which will yield Matter of much Objection to* Deiſts. *If* Miracles *prove Nothing but* Power, *and if We muſt take in the* Prophecies *of the Old Teſtament, before We can urge our Saviour's* ſupernatural *Works in Proof of his Miſſion, then We have a much wider Field of Controverſy, and more intricate Courſe of Argument to maintain, in order to convince Gainſayers, than I can apprehend to be neceſſary. What our Bleſſed Lord ſays of Himſelf,* The ſame *Works* that I do, *bear Witneſs* of me, that the Father hath ſent me. *John* v. 36. *is as applicable and as convincing to* Gentiles *as to* Jews. *As He converſed chiefly with the latter, He ſometimes referred to the* Prophecies *concerning Himſelf, and He ſometimes alſo refers to his* Miracles, *without the leaſt Notice of any Predictions, as immediately and directly proving a Divine Miſſion.* The Works that I do in my Father's Name, they bear Witneſs of me. *John* x. 25, *and again,* If I do not the Works of my Father, believe me not; But if I do, tho' Ye believe not me, believe the Works, *and then He adds the Doctrine which They were to believe on this Evidence, not that merely of the* Prophets, *at leaſt not that which They acknowleged as ſuch; but what was now new to them, and advanced upon the Authority of the Propoſer of it:* That Ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him. *v.* 38. *According then to our Saviour's Way of arguing, theſe* Works of the Father, *that is* ſupernatural *Works, prove ſomething more than* Power; *They prove the Aſſiſtance of the Father, who would not aſſiſt in the Support of a* Lie; *and conſequently they prove the* Truth *of the Doctrines delivered by Him, who is thus ſupported. A Claim of a Divine Miſſion, atteſted*

by

by Works plainly miraculous, *is repreſented by our Lord as valid and unqueſtionable, and what the Spectators ought to acquieſce in; and This alone was ſufficient, and was often urged alone to eſtabliſh his Pretenſions. To the* Jews *who knew that the Coming of the* Meſſiah *had been* foretold *under ſuch and ſuch Circumſtances, Miracles might be of ſome Uſe to obviate their Objection from the* appearing *Contrariety of ſome Prophecies, and the* Want of Completion *as yet of Others; and They were at leaſt of as much Force to* Heathens, *who lay not under thoſe Difficulties, to prove directly the Divine Authority of the Perſon thus commiſſioned.*

I ſhall paſs over therefore the enſuing Pages on the Prophecies concerning Chriſt, *and particularly the unſcriptural Account of the Streſs that is laid on his* Death, *as foreign to the Point of the* Credibility of Miracles, *and ſhall proceed to the next Reflection relating to that Subject.* "*Be it ſo then,*" *ſays this Gentleman,* "*that Miracles, in general, are no Ar-*
"*guments of any Thing but* Power, *yet when any*
"*particular Miracle is applied in Atteſtation of a*
"*Perſon, to whom* many *Characters belonged, and in*
"*whom* Some *were already fulfilled, and others would*
"*in due Courſe of Time be fulfilled; the Miracle*
"*proves the* Atteſtation *of ſome Being, ſuperior to*
"*Man, to the Truth of the Thing aſſerted.*" (*P.* 66, 67.) *This Conceſſion is material, and I would aſk, Is this the* only *Caſe in which a Miracle proves ſuch Atteſtation? This Caſe as ſtated in the Completion of ſome Prophecies, and the Want of the Completion of Others, is attended with ſome Advantages and ſome Difficulties; and is it not equally true, that where there is neither of theſe with Reſpect to* Prophecy, *but where a Perſon declares Himſelf commiſſioned by God to reveal ſome ſalutary Truths to Mankind, and appeals to miraculous Powers for his Credentials, thoſe Miracles,*

if

if true, will prove the Atteſtation of God Himſelf to the Truth of what is aſſerted? The Denial of this muſt end in ſome of the Abſurdities before ſpecified; but I obſerve that Moſt of theſe Gentlemen ſeem rather to avoid the Queſtion than to give a direct Anſwer. There follow in this Paragraph, ſome leſs explicit Remarks on the ſuppoſed Knowlege of the Revealer—*on its* ſeeming natural to conclude that Superior Beings have more extenſive Views, and more enlarged Capacities, *&c. and on the* Probability *that They when they interpoſe, will declare the Truth. To this it is obvious to anſwer that the moſt powerful Beings derive their Power from God, and are reſtrained by Him in the Exerciſe of it. They will not be permitted to work Miracles uncontroled in Support of Falſhood, and therefore, if their Miracles are genuine, it is more than a* Probability *that they declare the Truth.*

We now return once more to the main Point. "*Are* "*not,*" *it is ſaid,* "*the Miracles of our Saviour* "*as* incredible in themſelves *as any other Mi-* "*racles related in Hiſtory?*" *(P.* 69.) *The Uncertainty of all Human Authority ariſing from many different Cauſes, the little Regard paid to* Heathen *and* Popiſh *Writers in their Report of ſupernatural Events are again remarked; and the Diſtinction is properly enquired after, why the Goſpel Miracles ſhould be admitted, and the others rejected, when both are very fully atteſted. The Words in which this Queſtion is here ſtated by this Author, would very ſufficiently point out the Difference, and anſwer all the Difficulties, but thoſe which Himſelf has ſtarted from the* Incredibility *of Miracles as* ſuch, *that is, as being contrary to the Courſe of Nature and of Experience. He ſays in this Place, and ſays juſtly, that* "*the* "*Things ſaid to be done by Popiſh Writers are ſuch,* "*that No One can pay any Credit to them. They*

"*ſeem*

" *ſeem to be rather the frantic Follies of Madmen, in* " *many Inſtances, than the Actions of any ſerious, rea-* " *ſonable Creatures.*" (*P.* 70.) *This certainly yields a very ſtrong Objection againſt the* Credibility *of them; but it is ſuch an One as does not hold againſt the Miracles of our Saviour. They were calculated to do Good, and to teach others to do ſo, and were every way reaſonable and worthy the Original They pretended to. This therefore is a clear and manifeſt Diſtinction, why the Miracles of our* Saviour *might well be admitted, tho' thoſe of the* Papiſts *be rejected, even if the Credit of the Witneſſes was equal in both Caſes; which I can by no Means allow. But the Difficulty raiſed by this Gentleman is not ſolved by this Diſtinction, but remains as yet in its full Force. Our Saviour's Miracles were as* incredible in themſelves, *as He terms it, that is, as contrary to Nature and Experience, as any others, and if ſuch* Incredibility *outweighs any Aſſurance that We can have of the* Perſonal Qualities *of Witneſſes, as We were before taught, then this Objection will be an inſuperable Bar to our Belief, and We can never get over it but by unſaying it again, and allowing that theſe Things* incredible in themſelves *are yet capable of being proved by proper Teſtimony. And this Courſe We ſhall happily find taken in the enſuing Pages, where Every Thing is given up, which the Reflections under the* firſt previous Queſtion *laboured to oppoſe.*

In anſwer to theſe Queſtions, " *Muſt All Mira-* " *cles be admitted, becauſe they are well vouched? Or* " *muſt they all be rejected, becauſe they are incredible* " *in themſelves, notwithſtanding they are well atteſt-* " *ed?—Or is there any Medium, by which We may* " *diſtinguiſh between ſuch as ought to be received, and* " *ſuch as ought to be rejected?*" *This Gentleman offers the following Obſervations:*

" *As*

" *As Miracles may poſſibly be done by the Interpoſi-*
" *tion of ſome Being ſuperior to Man, ſo it muſt be*
" *owned, that they* may *be faithfully related, exactly*
" *as the Event was: And whenever they are faith-*
" *fully related, they become as much the proper Ob-*
" *jects of Belief, as any other hiſtorical Facts what-*
" *ever. The Power of our Saviour, or of his Apoſtles,*
" *in Virtue of ſupernatural Aſſiſtances, to cure a* Sick,
" *or a* Lame *Man, or to raiſe a* Dead *One, implies*
" *no Contradiction, nor is it an impoſſible Conception;*
" *and therefore ſuch a Power* may *poſſibly be exerted.*
" *And the Teſtimony of an* Eye-Witneſs may be
" *faithfully ſet down in Words; and what convinced*
" *a Spectator of the Truth of any extraordinary*
" *Fact,* may be *worthy of Credit. Suppoſe then the*
" *Relator to be no ways credulous; to be faithful; to*
" *be a Man of Judgment and Integrity; to be not*
" *weak and ſuperſtitious; nor to have any other Inte-*
" *reſt to ſerve, but that of Right and Truth—Such*
" *Teſtimony may be credible in Matter of* Miracle,
" *as well as in common Caſes. For Miracles, how*
" *much ſoever above the Power of Man, are not*
" *above the Powers of Beings ſuperior to Man;*
" *and therefore* may be *done by ſuch Interpoſition.*"
(P. 71.)

This State of the Caſe appears to be not only right and true, but to be a direct Reverſal of all that was before offered againſt the Credibility *of Miracles as* ſuch, *as not anſwering to any Thing which We Our-ſelves have ſeen or heard of, and as outweighing any Aſſurance which We can have of the* Perſonal Qualities *of the Witneſſes. It is now allowed that Miracles may be done; that they may be ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed, recorded and atteſted; and that in ſuch a Caſe they* may be *as credible as any common Facts. This is as favourable a Deciſion of the* previous Queſtions *as the Adverſaries of Dr.* M. *would deſire, and will obviate*

obviate all the Difficulties which ſeemed to be intended againſt them. It is added, that " *Circumſtances may* " *be ſuch as to counterballance the* Incredibility *of* " *the Thing*;" *and that,* " *if the* Incredibility *of* " *the* Thing *can be any ways removed, then the* " Credibility *of the* Perſon *may be ſuch, as to make* " *his Relation of any Fact* credible." *The removing the* Incredibility *of Things* incredible in themſelves *is a new Scheme to me; however I am glad it can be done, if it be neceſſary to eſtabliſh the Miracles of the Goſpel; and I will examine, if the ſame Method that is uſed to that Purpoſe, may not be of ſome Uſe likewiſe to eſtabliſh thoſe which are ſaid to have been wrought in the Primitive Church.* " *Let* " *Us ſuppoſe,*" *ſays this Writer,* " *the Miracles of* " *our Saviour to be Facts as incredible in them-* " *ſelves as other Miracles are; yet if ſuch Circum-* " *ſtances can be ſhewn in Favour of his Miracles, as* " *will ſhew a* Credibility *of a* ſupernatural Interpo- " ſition, *in Order to produce them; then the Credi-* " *bility of the Perſons relating them, will give them* " *actual Credit.*" (*P.* 72.) *And then I add, that if ſuch Circumſtances can be ſhewn to continue in Favour of the Miracles of his Apoſtles, and their immediate Succeſſors, as will ſhew a* Credibility *of a* ſupernatural Interpoſition *in order to produce them, then the* Credibility *of the* Perſons *relating them will likewiſe give them actual Credit. Under this Head, the* Credibility *of thoſe* Perſons, *who have given us the Hiſtory of our Saviour's miraculous Actions, is clearly illuſtrated and well expreſſed, and the concluding Remark upon it is, that* " *here the Objection, if any,* " *muſt lie, not againſt the* Witneſſes, *who are Per-* " *ſons of Credit, who* ſaw *and examined what They* " *reported, and were not impoſed on; but it muſt be* " *againſt the* Miracle *itſelf, as a Thing* incredible " *in its own Nature.*" *This Difficulty as yet remains*

remains in its full Force; and it is added, that "*if* "*indeed the Miracles related are ridiculous them-* "*ſelves, or have no End, or a bad One, they may* "*juſtly be rejected, let the Hiſtorian be otherwiſe* "*ever ſo able and judicious; becauſe in ſuch Caſes* "*no Arguments can be brought, which will remove* "*the Difficulty ariſing from the* Incredibility *of the* "*Thing itſelf.*" (P. 74.) *I ſhall only on this Occaſion repeat the Danger of our* miſtaking *in our Judgment concerning Miracles which are repreſented as ridiculous, or as having no End, or a bad one. For if, according to the State of the Caſe before Us,* "*the* "*Hiſtorians themſelves have all thoſe Qualities,* "*which are requiſite to make them believed, Faithful-* "*neſs, Abilities, Reſolution to ſpeak the Truth, and* "*a Deteſtation of Falſhood, and were Eye-Witneſſes of* "*what They relate,*" *in ſuch a Caſe I ſhould rather ſuſpect my own Judgment than theirs, and ſhould impute the Appearance of the Grounds for ſuch Charges to my own narrow and partial View, till a ſtrict Examination had convinced me of the contrary. The Point in View at preſent is, where the Witneſſes are in every Reſpect unexceptionable, what Circumſtances ſhall ſo confirm the* original Incredibility *of a Miracle in itſelf, as to render it abſolutely and* finally incredible. *Its anſwering a* bad *End would indeed be an inſuperable Objection, but this would be inconſiſtent with the Qualities already ſuppoſed and ſpecified of theſe competent Witneſſes, and is therefore an imaginary Caſe. Its anſwering* no *End, may mean no more than none that We can ſee, which is no unſurmountable Difficulty; for They, who wrought it, might diſcern a proper Occaſion for it, tho' We do not; and if They were ſuch as claimed a Divine Commiſſion to inſtruct and reform Mankind, Any Act of Power exerted under ſuch a Claim, anſwered evidently a gene-*

ral and very important End. The ſuppoſed Ridiculouſneſs of a Miracle as diſtinct from thoſe Objections already ſpecified, muſt relate to the Manner *in which it is wrought; and I would be glad to know, where the End is worthy of a Divine Interpoſition, where the Witneſſes are every way qualified and diſpoſed to atteſt the Truth, what* Method *of interpoſing ſupernaturally ſhall be thought to render the whole Account* incredible, *if it be attended with no other Exception. Every Event is liable to be turned to Ridicule; Unuſual Ones, and ſuch as are contrary to the Courſe of Nature, are ſtill more liable than others; and have been ſo turned by Scepticks; but Believers, who know that the Methods of interpoſing by Miracles have been various, and that ſuch as have at firſt born a ſurprizing Appearance, have yet upon Examination proved to be genuine, ſhould be cautious how They give a Handle to ridicule the Truth, or to make Objections, which Unbelievers will retort upon the Matters of* their *Belief. The Truth of this Caſe ſeems to be this, that where a Miracle reported is really* ridiculous *in the Form or Manner of working it, it is always* exceptionable *likewiſe or* defective *in the Evidence; and other Circumſtances concur to ſhew the* Incredibility *of it.*

The 2d Obſervation offered to remove the Incredibility *of Things ſo* incredible *in themſelves as all Miracles are repreſented to be, is this; "It muſt be "owned that God may at any Time, or in any Place, "interpoſe; and, if He thinks fit, He may cure Diſ-"eaſes, heal the Sick, or reſtore Eyes to the Blind, "or Feet to the Lame, or relieve any diſtreſſed Per-"ſon, and reſtore Him to his Health with or with-"out any viſible Means: And ſuch Caſes as theſe "may be faithfully related, and the Facts may claim "Belief, if really done." This Conceſſion of the* Poſſibility *of Miracles is ſoon abated and ballanced by*

this

this Remark, that they are "possible *only, and not* "*much confirmed by Experience, and that therefore* "*Other People have a Right to ſuſpect or doubt* "*of the Truth of them, how much ſoever the Party* "*relieved may have Reaſon to be thankful for the* "*Benefit received:*" (*P.* 74.) *And then enſues this general Obſervation as the Reſult of the Whole, which I cannot think contributes to aid our Conceptions, or to obviate the Difficulties uſually ſtarted on this Subject.* "*If the Credibility of the Relator outweighs* "*the Improbability of ſuch extraordinary Interpoſition,* "*the Fact will be admitted; but if the Reverſe hap-* "*pens, it will be rejected.*" (*P.* 75.) *Compare this with the forementioned Aſſertion, that the* "Impro-"bability *of miraculous Events outweighs any Aſſu-* "*rance that We can have of* Perſonal Qualities," *and I am afraid We ſhall gain but little towards eſtabliſhing the Belief of any Miracles from the Conceſſion in the former Part of this Paragraph: At leaſt We gain no Mark of Diſtinction, by which We may determine what Particulars, when propoſed to our Aſſent, ſhould be admitted or rejected.*

I very readily agree with this Writer in his Reflections on the unreaſonable Conſequences, *which artful or ignorant People annex to their Belief of Miracles; and I have had Occaſion to make the ſame Reflections in the enſuing Papers; but I cannot diſcern the Uſe or Pertinence of them under this Head: I cannot perceive how they are connected with the Point in View, that is, how they point out the Difference, why the Miracles of the Goſpel, as contrary to the Courſe of Nature, and therefore as* incredible *in themſelves as others, according to his State of the Caſe, ſhould be admitted, tho' all others be rejected.*

It is obſerved, 3dly, that "*the* End *of a Miracle* "*may be* good, *i. e. it may be conceived to anſwer a* "good Purpoſe; *but yet this is not always ſufficient*

" *to make it* credible." (*P.* 76.) *It is ſufficient to remove the Charge of* Incredibility *in the Thing itſelf, which is all the Purpoſe, which it is urged to ſerve. Whether upon the Whole it deſerves Credit, will depend on the Notoriety of the Fact, and the Teſtimony of competent Witneſſes; but if it is apparently calculated to anſwer ſome* good End, *this will be a preſumptive Circumſtance at leaſt in its Favour, and will ſhew that it is capable of being proved. This Gentleman goes on to add, that* " *it is* hard *for Us to ſay,* " *(if it be* poſſible *at all) to how many, or to what* " *Degree,* Good *muſt be extended, in order to the* " *Belief of a Miracle.*" (*P.* 77.) *I cannot apprehend that there is any Difficulty at all in this Caſe, if it be rightly ſtated. The Belief of a Miracle does not reſt merely on the* extenſive Good, *which it is ſaid to ſerve, however neceſſary this may be as a preliminary Article, but on the* external Evidence *with which it is offered to our Aſſent. A Report of a ſupernatural Interpoſition may appear to anſwer a very* important *Purpoſe, and yet may fail in ſome capital Point reſpecting the* Witneſſes, *ſo as to be finally and deſervedly rejected. Another Report of the miraculous Kind may ſerve* a leſs extenſive *Benefit, and yet may come ſo well recommended by able, inquiſitive, ſagacious, faithful, diſintereſted* Witneſſes, *as to gain and almoſt extort Aſſent. When therefore this Gentleman proceeds to aſk,* " *Will a Good done to a* ſingle *Perſon be ſufficient to* " *make One give Credit to the Report?*" *The ready Anſwer is, this Circumſtance alone will not confirm it, but it will ſhew that it may be confirmed, if the Evidence offered in Proof of it, does upon Examination of it, ſtand unexceptionable. We Believers know that Providence has thought ſuch an Occaſion deſerving of his extraordinary Protection and Interpoſition, and therefore We cannot conſiſtently fix our Objection on this Point, if the Atteſtation offered be unexceptionable in every other.*

This

This Remark will obviate the Force of the following Queſtions and Anſwers. " *Is the Vindication of* In-
" nocency *in ſingle Perſons a ſufficient Good to au-*
" *thorize, or give Credit to ſuch miraculous Accounts?*
" *No. Such Miracles done among the* Heathens *are*
" *not credited.*" (*P.* 77, 78.) *But why are they not credited? Not becauſe the Occaſions are unworthy of a Divine Interpoſition, but becauſe they fail in Point of Evidence, becauſe related by Hiſtorians in After-Ages, againſt whoſe Teſtimony there lies a Variety of Exceptions. Again,* " *Is the granting Health to the Sick, and*
" *Strength to the Weak and Lame, an End ſufficient*
" *to give Credit to a Miracle done for ſuch Purpoſes?*
" *We refuſe Aſſent to a thouſand Stories of this Sort,*
" *which* Popiſh *Writers are conſtantly relating.*"
(*P.* 79.) *We do ſo, but not as thinking the Facts unworthy of God to perform, but as defective in many Reſpects in the Evidence with which they are propoſed to Us. The Relief of* Innocent *and* Diſtreſſed *Perſons by ſupernatural Interpoſition is ſuch an End as can yield no Objection from the Nature of it, yet this Conſideration* alone *will not authorize the Report, or entitle it to our Aſſent. It ſhews Nothing more than that it* may *be true; the Authority, on which it is reported, remains to be examined, and muſt ſtand a ſtrict Examination before it can reaſonably expect to be credited.*

It is added, 4thly, that " *It has been ſuggeſted,*
" *that as the Miracles done by Chriſt and the Apoſtles,*
" *were done in Confirmation of the Truth of the Chriſ-*
" *tian Religion, ſo the Miracles done* ſince *thoſe Times*
" *were done for the* ſame End. *They were done to*
" confirm the Truths *of the* Goſpel, *and ſince They*
" *were done to promote the* ſame End *as the Miracles*
" *of Chriſt were, and They are related by* Eye-Wit-
" neſſes, *or by Men of Abilities, and exact Enquirers*
" *into their Truth, they are all equally to be believed.*"
(*P.* 78.) *There follows as favourable an Acknow-*

ledgment as could be desired, that if the Suggestion be supported, the Inference would hold good; that "if it "be proved that the Miracles done by the Saints, *were "done to* confirm *the* Old Religion, *they ought to "be equally credited with those of the Gospel. For "Facts of the same Sort, done for the same End, are "equally credible." But supposing the Facts to be done, How do We know, says He, "that they were done for "the same End?" We can know this only from the Declaration of those, who claimed the Power, and that is explicit and clear enough to this Purpose. Why, says He, "Does it appear that St.* Martin *or* Macarius, "or any other Saint, ever declared *that this was the "End of their Miracles?"* (P. 79.) *This is a* previous Question, *which no way concerns those Answerers of Dr. M. who confined their Defence to those Miracles* preceding *the Civil Establishment of Christianity. If Those, who came after, did not assign this as the End for which they wrought supernatural Works, This shews the great Difference of their Claims, and is a Distinction which, amongst others, may reasonably be insisted on, to illustrate the superior Credibility of those supernatural Endowments, which are so solemnly attested during the three first Centuries. For did not the Apologists in that Interval urge them as Arguments in Confirmation of the Truth of the Gospel? Did not* Justin Martyr, Tertullian, Minucius Felix, Origen, *and* Lactantius *appeal to the Miraculous Powers of Christians in Proof of the Truth of their Pretensions? What this Gentleman observes, with Respect to our Blessed Lord, is applicable likewise to them; that "there was no Oc-"casion, or Necessity, that They should, upon working "every Miracle that They did,* expresly declare, "*for what End They did it.*" (P. 80.) *Since in their Discourses professedly written in Vindication of their Religion, They urge these supernatural Works in Evidence of its Divine Authority, it could not be necessary, when*

every

every one was wrought to ſay, This is done to prove the Truth of Chriſtianity. Their Claim being known, each Miracle of Courſe was conſidered in that Light; and however true it may be with Reſpect to the Saints of After-Ages, that "there is generally a profound Silence "why or for what End all their Miracles were "done," (P. 79.) Yet it is not ſo in Regard to the earlier Apologiſts. They with one Conſent ſay that God had continued theſe miraculous Powers in the Church to confirm the Faith of Believers; whereas Some of the later Writers own that the extraordinary Gifts given for this End were withdrawn. Since therefore the Miracles of the Primitive Church for the three firſt Centuries, are ſaid to have been wrought for the ſame End as thoſe of the Goſpel, ſo far they are, as this Gentleman allows, equally credible. No Objection, at leaſt, can lie againſt them on this Account, and if the Witneſſes are in other Reſpects unexceptionable, They will deſerve and meet with Credit: For certainly the End alledged was well worthy of a Divine Interpoſition.

The 5th Obſervation, after a Repetition of the Succeſs of many Impoſtures, and the Improbability of all Miracles at firſt View, ends in theſe Inquiries. "Is "there any Teſt by which We may judge of the Mira-"cles done by our Lord and his Diſciples, and know "that they were really done? Or can We point out any "Difference betwixt them and thoſe that have been "done, or are pretended to have been done, ſince thoſe "Times, ſo as to make the One more credible than the "Other? Or, in ſhort, How may We fairly point "out the Difference betwixt what We are to believe, "and what we are to reject?" (P. 81.) This is a laudable Attempt, and it will not, I hope, be thought a blameable one, if I attend to the Reaſonings here uſed, and obſerve how far they may juſtly be applied to eſtabliſh or to weaken the Credibility of the Miracles of the Primitive Church.

It is ſaid, "*that the Argument for the Truth or* "*Credibility of the Miracles of Chriſt and the Apoſtles* "*not only has all the Advantages which the Argument* "*for any other Hiſtorical Fact has; but has likewiſe* "*an additional Strength, which almoſt all other paſt* "*Facts are deficient in.*" (P. 83.) *It does not ſeem neceſſary to me to depreciate the Evidence for the Miracles in the Ages immediately ſucceeding, in order to eſtabliſh thoſe of the Apoſtolical Age; or to aſſert this* Deficiency *in* almoſt all other paſt Facts *to ſupport the additional Strength of thoſe preceding ones. However, let not an Aſſertion determine the Point, but let the Caſe be fairly examined and determined; and God forbid that I ſhould deny any Superiority of Evidence, which really appears in Favour of the Miracles of the Goſpel.*

It is ſaid, "Firſt, *They have the Atteſtation of* "*Men of Probity and Integrity, that many Facts were* "*done by them, which were ſuperior to any Powers of* "*Men.*" (P. 83.) *This is moſt certainly true of the Miracles of the Goſpel; but it will be no Prejudice to that Truth to ſay, that thoſe of the Primitive Church have likewiſe this Advantage. They are atteſted by the unanimous Suffrage of Perſons every way qualified to judge of them. I may juſtly apply the well-choſen Words of this Gentleman to this Purpoſe.* "*All the Topics* "*taken from ſufficient Information, Ability to know,* "*and Honeſty to relate; the Perſecutions They under-* "*went for the Truth of their Teſtimonies; their Con-* "*ſciouſneſs of the heinous Crime of Lying; their preach-* "*ing conſtantly their Accountableneſs to God for all* "*their Actions; and their Senſe of the Juſtice of their* "*Damnation, who did* Evil that Good might come "of it; *their leaving all Things for the Truth of* "*Chriſt; their expoſing themſelves to Impriſonment, to* "*Stripes, to be ſtoned, to be ſhipwrecked, to all Sorts* "*of Hazards and Inconveniences for the Sake of Chriſt;* "*in ſhort, every Topic that tends to confirm the Truth*

 "*of*

" of the Things which the first Disciples of Christ " wrote or taught, has here its fullest Strength." This Gentleman seemed conscious that this Reply would be made; and therefore having so urged it, He answers, " Be it so, I therefore add

" Secondly, That the Enemies to Christianity have " born their Testimonies to the Miracles of Christ, as " well as the Friends of the Gospel; and consequently " the Truth of the Gospel does not depend solely upon the " Testimonies of Men that may be charged, or are pre- " tended to be charged with Credulity, or Folly, or " even Forgery itself." (P. 84.) In this Respect likewise the Miracles of the Primitive Church are strongly recommended to our Assent. They are supported by the Testimony of Enemies as well as Friends. Some Proofs of this have been offered and more referred to in the ensuing Sheets. Dr. M. indeed was pleased to say that " in the Performance of their Miracles they were al- " ways charged with Fraud and Imposture by their " Adversaries." (Free Inquiry, P. 22.) Such a Charge, I observed, was likely enough to come from Adversaries, and was of little Weight as coming from them. And I farther observed that this however was not universally brought, but that at other Times They shifted the Objection, and chose rather to suppose that their Miracles were wrought by the Assistance of Dæmons. Some Instances of this have been assigned, and the proper Remark on them is that which this Gentleman has made on Julian's Mention of our Blessed Lord's Miracles, " Let them treat them in their own Man- " ner, since They expressly allow such Facts to be done," (P. 85.) Should other Passages be produced, wherein these Adversaries seem to deny the Reality of these Facts, and to mention them as Fables, This Gentleman will supply Us with another very pertinent Answer, that " This will shew that They had no certain Scheme by " which They could attack the Christians, and that

" They

"*They said any Thing either to leſſen, or to calumniate* "*what They could not fairly refute.*" (P. 91.)

But upon a Review of Dr. M'*s Objection on this Head, which the Author of theſe* previous Queſtions *ſeems to confirm by mentioning the Teſtimony of Enemies as peculiar to the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, I do not find that He has made good his Aſſertion in a ſingle Inſtance,* "*that the Primitive Chriſtians in the* "*Performance of their Miracles were always charged* "*with Fraud and Impoſture by their Adverſaries.*" *However true This may have been, yet it does not appear from any Proofs produced or referred to by* Dr. M. Lucian *is his firſt Author, and He is brought in as ſaying, that* whenever any crafty Juggler, expert in his Trade, and who knew how to make a right Uſe of Things, went over to the Chriſtians, He was ſure to grow rich immediately, by making a Prey of their Simplicity. *This might be, and was probably, intended as a Reflection on the* Simplicity *of the Chriſtians, who are often ſo cenſured by their Adverſaries as an artleſs and unimproved Set of Men, but certainly it implies no Kind of Charge of their being practiſed and ſucceſsful Themſelves in exhibiting counterfeit Miracles. Had They been ſo, They would certainly have been more apt to ſuſpect and more quick at detecting others that came into their Society with ſuch Pretenſions, ſo that a crafty Juggler would not have thrived ſo well amongſt them. The Account itſelf was probably an abuſive Miſrepreſentation; but ſuppoſing it to be true, All that We could reaſonably infer from it would be, that as They knew that many real Miracles were wrought amongſt them, They were too apt to give Credit to all ſuch Pretenſions, and thereby to give Encouragement to Some who pretended to them without any Foundation. Such a Suppoſition muſt imply their own Innocence in this Reſpect; for a Conſciouſneſs of a like Prevarication in themſelves would have made them*

more

more ſuſpicious and more cautious in giving their own Aſſent to Others.

Nor is Celſus's *Teſtimony any more to the Purpoſe. We are told that* "*He repreſents all the Chriſtian* "*Wonder-Workers as mere Vagabonds and common* "*Cheats.*" (Free Inquiry, P. 23.) *And to ſupport this We are preſented with a Quotation from one Place, and a Reference and Tranſlation of another Place in* Origen's *Book againſt* Celſus. *But in neither of theſe Places is there a Word of any Chriſtian-Wonder-Workers, as the Dr. moſt ingeniouſly phraſes it. In the firſt Place there quoted* Celſus *ſpeaks (as Dr.* Church *well obſerves) not of any particular Wonder-Workers, but of Chriſtians in general.** He calls Us Deceivers, *the Reaſon follows —ὅτι φεύγομεν χαριεντίζεσθαι κ. τ. λ. He would inſinuate that Chriſtians were generally ignorant and unlearned, and from thence would infer that Chriſtianity itſelf was an Impoſture, and the Teachers of it Deceivers. But as to any Claim of miraculous Powers, there is not a Word relating to it either in* Celſus's *Objection, or* Origen's *Anſwer. The other Place is as little to his Purpoſe.* Celſus *had quoted that Paſſage of St.* Paul—not many Wiſe Men after the Fleſh, &c. *from thence taking Occaſion to repreſent Chriſtians as ignorant and ſilly People; and then goes on to compare them to Jugglers, who avoided Men of Senſe, and applied themſelves wholly to the Ignorant and Unlearned. But not a Word is there here of Miracles, or of any Chriſtian Wonder-Workers; Nor does* Celſus *ſay, as Dr.* M. *makes him ſay, that the Chriſtians were Vagabonds and common Cheats, or that They play'd any Tricks. He compares them indeed to Jugglers, but that in this Reſpect only, that They avoided the wiſe and applied themſelves to the ignorant. And even this* Origen *treats as a mere*

* γόητας ἡμᾶς καλεῖ.

Calumny.

Calumny *. See here how He abuſes Us? comparing Us to Jugglers in the Market Place. But what Tricks do We ſhew? Or what like this do We do? *And again* †, In this He only reviles us like Women ſcolding in the Streets. *He afterwards goes on to anſwer the Objection itſelf, but does not ſay one Word of any Claim of Miracles. Yet this low Invective, Dr.* M. *a Chriſtian Divine, thought fit to retail, giving a falſe Tranſlation, and altering the Senſe to ſerve his Purpoſe; without taking Notice either of the Occaſion which introduced theſe Words, or the Anſwer given to them. With Reſpect to this Teſtimony I ſhall only add, that it is very obſervable that throughout this whole Book of* Origen, *We do not find any Charge of Impoſture laid againſt the Chriſtians of thoſe Days, or any Account of Frauds detected among them, or any Occaſion given to* Origen *to make any Apology, or offer any Vindication of the Miracles of that Age. On the contrary We find him ſpeaking boldly and confidently of thoſe Miracles as of Things well known and undiſputed. As to Dr.* M's *Quotation from* Minucius Felix *on this Occaſion, it is not eaſy to ſay with what View He introduced it; unleſs to caſt a Reflection on the firſt Chriſtians and their Religion, it not having the leaſt Reference to the Power or Claim of working Miracles. And tho' He is pleaſed to tell Us that* Julian *and* Porphyry *likewiſe charged the Primitive Chriſtians with Fraud and Impoſture in the Performance of their Miracles, yet he has not produced one Quotation from either of them to ſupport the Aſſertion. If indeed He*

* Ὁρᾶ δὴ καὶ ἐν τούτοις τίνα τρόπον ἡμᾶς συκοφαντεῖ, ἐξομοιῶν τοῖς ἐν ταῖς ἀγοραῖς τὰ ἐπιφθονώτατα, ἐπιδεικνυμένοις καὶ ἀγείρουσι. Ποῖα δὴ ἐπιφθονώτατα ἐπιδεικνύμεθα; ἢ τί τούτοις παραπλήσιον πράττομεν; Orig. cont. Celſ. P. 480. Ben. Ed.

† Ἐν τούτῳ οὐδὲν ἄλλο ποιῶν, ἢ λοιδορούμενος ἡμῖν παραπλησίως ταῖς ἐν ταῖς τριόδοις γυναιξὶ σκοπὸν ἐχούσαις τὸ ταχεῖς ἀλλήλας λέγειν. (P. 482.)

had,

had, and had made it good by a Paſſage clear to the Purpoſe, it would only follow from hence that the Heathens were divided in their Opinion on this Subject, and were inconſiſtent with Each Other, and ſometimes with themſelves, in their Objections againſt their miraculous Deeds. This would not invalidate the other plain Teſtimonies of Adverſaries allowing and accounting for the wonderful Works wrought amongſt Chriſtians; but would only ſhew that They had no certain Scheme, as this Gentleman obſerves, by which They could Attack the Chriſtians: Whereas Dr. M. at leaſt has failed even in this Point of proving that Any of their Enemies denied the Reality of theſe extraordinary Facts.

So far then the Miracles of the Primitive Church appear to have every Circumſtance to eſtabliſh their Credibility, which is as yet urged to eſtabliſh thoſe of the Goſpel. They have the poſitive Atteſtation of Witneſſes every way qualified to judge of them, and they have the farther Advantage of the Acknowledgment of their Genuineneſs even by Many of the Adverſaries who were zealous to oppoſe the Cauſe in which they were wrought.

There remains one farther Obſervation. It is aſſerted, "Thirdly, that the Miracles of Chriſt have a peculiar "Evidence which is ſtrictly concluſive,—giving a De"gree of Credibility which the Miracles of all "other Perſons are defective in." (P. 93.) This Evidence is, that our Saviour and his Apoſtles had the Power of foretelling future Events, which We ſee by the Completion of their Predictions in ſeveral Inſtances: And the Inference is that "when We are ſure that "Chriſt and his Apoſtles were under the Influence of "ſome Power ſuperior to that of Man, in one Inſtance, "of which We Ourſelves are competent Judges; We "may be ſure that the Miracles performed by them ought "to be looked upon as credible, ſince the ſupernatural "Power that enabled them to foretell future Events, "was ſufficient to enable them to work Mira-

"cles."

" cles." (P. 101.) *The intermediate Pages on the Completion of many of the Prophecies recorded in the New Teſtament, are ſo well drawn up that I ſhould eſteem it more Honour to have been Author of them, than of all the Rhetorick of the* Free Inquiry; *its* Vindication *and* Defences. *It is not a Matter of Choice that I differ in ſo many other Particulars from a Gentleman, who, in my poor Judgment, has ſo well treated this Part of the Argument. I ſhall offer however ſome Obſervations on this peculiar Circumſtance.*

In the firſt Place it is no Part of the poſitive Evidence *of the Miracles of the Goſpel that they were attended with ſome prophetical Declarations. It is not urged ſo in this Place, but only as a preſumptive Proof, as an Anſwer to, and Removal of a ſuppoſed* Incredibility *in all Reports of Miracles; for it is argued, that* " *the Being that enabled them to* foretell *Events* " *at ſuch* diſtant *Periods, and ſo* minutely, might " *enable them to* do *what credible Witneſſes have re-* " *lated concerning them.*" *But if there be no ſuch abſolute* Incredibility *in all Miracles as is ſuppoſed; if, in a ſofter Term, the general* Improbability *of them may be removed by other Circumſtances, which may even raiſe a reaſonable Expectation of ſuch an Interpoſition, and if very credible Witneſſes be produced, which poſitively relate them; then they may very well deſerve and demand our Aſſent, tho' they are not attended with* prophetic *Impulſes; the ſuppoſed Objection being as effectually removed another Way.* Prophecies *do not imply* Miracles, *for Some whom We know to have had the Gift of the former, made no Pretenſions to the latter. Neither do* Miracles *imply* Prophecies, *according to this Gentleman's own Conceſſions. He profeſſes that He* " *does not mean to affirm* " *that all other Miracles are* fictitious;" (P. 93. *or* " *that all Miracles are forged or counterfeit, that are* " *not attended with Prophecy;*" (P. 96.) *If there-*

fore

fore the grand Difficulty concerning the Improbability *of any miraculous Interpoſition can be taken off by ſome very pertinent and ſtrong Argument, it will not be any Objection to other well-atteſted Miracles, that it was not done exactly in the ſame Method as in thoſe of the Goſpel, namely by the Concurrence of Predictions.*

Now I conceive there is as ſtrong an Argument to be produced to remove any ſuch ſuppoſed Incredibility *in Reſpect to the Miracles of the Primitive Church, as could poſſibly be brought in ſuch a Caſe; and that is, the confeſſed Interpoſition of the Deity in a miraculous Manner in Favour of the ſame Cauſe, in the Age immediately preceding. As this Gentleman argued from* Prophecies *to* Miracles, *ſo argue I from the Miracles of the* Apoſtolick *Age to thoſe* next *ſucceeding.—The ſame Being that enabled the firſt Diſciples of Chriſt, to work ſo many and ſuch evident Miracles in Proof of his Religion,* might *enable their Converts to do the ſame, whilſt the like Difficulties, or greater, obſtructed their Progreſs—and when We are ſure that Chriſt and his Apoſtles were under the Influence of ſome Power ſuperior to that of Man in the Performance of their wonderful Works, which We Ourſelves acknowledge, We may be ſure likewiſe that the Miracles of their Succeſſors, if ſufficiently atteſted, are in this Reſpect to be looked on as credible; ſince the ſupernatural Power that enabled the former to work their Miracles, was ſufficient to enable the Others to do the ſame, in Vindication of the ſame Doctrine. Thus the grand Objection ſo much inſiſted on, from the* Nature *of miraculous Operations is fully removed, and there is Room to admit the Credibility of Witneſſes. Thus the Prophecies tending to eſtabliſh the* Credibility *of the Goſpel-Miracles, do thereby concur in eſtabliſhing thoſe of the Ages next ſucceeding: And if the Witneſſes in thoſe Ages are unexceptionable in their Opportunities of knowing, judging, and reporting,*

ing, and in their Integrity in making true Report, no Objection can here lie against Miracles as such; when We allow them to be wrought for the same Purpose but just before, and when no Circumstances had happen'd to alter the Case, at least not to alter it for the better, and to make Miracles less expedient than before. Whilst such Occasion continued, it is highly probable that such extraordinary Assistance should continue as We know to have been given in the like Situation; and the Incredibility *spoken of all Miracles is not barely removed, but an Expectation is justly raised that here we should find them well attested. Where such Occasion for the Use and Application of Miracles ceases, there this Argument no longer holds; for tho' the Power of God is always the same, and equally able to lend such Assistance, yet the* Credibility *that He will interpose, is not always the same, but depends on Circumstances which may deserve such an extraordinary Interposition. It is sufficient to the present Purpose that this Credibility with Respect to the Use and Expediency of it continued in a good Degree of Force till the Civil Establishment of Christianity.*

I would not be understood to say that during that whole Period there was equal *Necessity for supernatural Interpositions; for the Occasion might vary in different Times and different Places within that Interval, according as the Gospel was more or less received in several Countries, and according as Persecutions did more or less rage in them. Where this Doctrine was newly preached and severely threatned, there this Kind of Assistance seemed most to be wanted, and is attested most to have been given. Where it had farther prevailed, or was most favourably tolerated; or where One of these Circumstances helped to take off the Disadvantage of the Other, there was the less pressing Necessity for the Continuance of these Miraculous Powers; which therefore, tho' not totally withdrawn*

drawn, might well be expected gradually to decline even before the abſolute Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity by the Civil Power: And to this Suppoſition and Argument on the Reaſon of the Thing, Fact and Hiſtory do remarkably correſpond.

It may farther be obſerved, that as the Credibility of the Goſpel-Miracles is here urged from the Certainty of the Prophecies *delivered by the ſame Perſons who are ſaid to have wrought them, ſo the very Fact which I am ſpeaking of, the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church after the Days of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, is itſelf a* Completion *of* One *of thoſe Predictions, and thereby a Confirmation in this Light of the Truth of their Pretenſions. That Prophetic Promiſe of our Lord,* Mark xvi. 17, 18. *that ſuch ſupernatural* Signs ſhould follow them that believe, *was not limited either by the Expreſſion, or the Context, or the Reaſon of the Thing, or the Uſe and Intent of the Gifts, to the Apoſtolic Age, but was in every Reſpect applicable to Thoſe who had the ſame or heavier Difficulties and Perſecutions to ſtruggle with: And when We find ſuch a full and unanimous Atteſtation of their Continuance, This is a very ſtrong Confirmation of the Arguments which might be raiſed on it in Speculation; and thus the Prophecy and the Completion of it reflect Light and Strength on each other. That this Prediction was thus applicable to the perſecuted Members of the Church in the three firſt Centuries, I have had Occaſion to ſhew in the enſuing Reply, and need not therefore review the Diſſertation of this Gentleman on this Subject.*

I cannot but obſerve that however this whole Performance may appear calculated to ſerve or ſupport the Cauſe of Dr. M. *and his Defenders, yet the Author of it differs from them in the firſt fundamental Principle on which they ſet out. Dr.* M. *had aſſerted that "No Force of Teſtimony can alter the Nature of Things." Which Mr.* Toll *explains to mean, that "no Force of Teſtimony can "make a Thing credible that is in itſelf incredible:" Whereas this Gentleman allows that Miracles are incre-*

dible in themſelves, and yet, in Vindication of the Miracles of the Goſpel, inſiſts that they may be ſo circumſtanced, as that a proper Force of Teſtimony may render them credible. It is not my Buſineſs to reconcile theſe Writers, but it has been my Endeavour to ſhew that theſe ſame Circumſtances, which, according to this Gentleman can alter the Nature of Credibility, *or can leave Room for Teſtimony to do it, are likewiſe of Weight in Favour of thoſe Miracles, which are the Subject of the* Free Inquiry; *and that the Reaſonings uſed on the* two previous Queſtions, *as far as they are concluſive and conſiſtent, will not prejudice the Arguments on the* remaining Queſtion *concerning the Continuance of Miracles in the Primitive Church.*

To recapitulate in few Words the Arguments in Favour of them.—They are not incredible *in* themſelves, *unleſs all Miracles are ſo, for they are claimed under no leſs Authority than that of the Author of Nature; and his Power is allowed to be ſufficient to the Purpoſe.—They are not* incredible *on the* Occaſion, *for the Cauſe in which they are ſaid to have been wrought, was worthy of God, no other than the Goſpel of his Bleſſed Son.—They are not* incredible *in Reſpect of* Time, *for they were not revived after a long Ceſſation of them, but are ſaid to have continued, as they might well be expected to do, from the Days of the Apoſtles, who are owned to have performed the ſame Wonders in Proof of the ſame Religion.—They are not* incredible *with Regard to their* Uſe, *for whilſt the Rulers of this World perſecuted this Profeſſion, the Converſion of Heathens and the Support of Believers needed this Aſſiſtance as much as in the Apoſtolick Age.—They are not* incredible *in the* Manner *in which it is ſaid they were wrought, for they were offered to publick Examinaton, and the Perſonal Security of the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity and the Succeſs of their Religion were readily and openly ſtaked upon the Reality of them.—They were not* incredible *in the* Subject *of them, being ſuch as was parallel to that of thoſe in the Goſpel: Such as Providence might be ſuppoſed to be*

concerned

concerned in; ſuch as was inſtrumental in removing the Darkneſs of Mens Minds, or healing the Infirmities of their Bodies;—Laſtly, they are not incredible *on Account of the* Witneſſes *atteſting them; who were not few, or weak, or falſe, or prejudiced, or intereſted Perſons; but ſuch as in every Reſpect deſerve the utmoſt Credit. They are unanimous in their Account of Miracles; ſeveral of them are the Eloquent Apologiſts and Defenders of the Chriſtian Faith; All of them Men of exemplary Truth and Piety: Many of Them Converts by theſe very Means to the Belief of this Religion; and Much the greater Part of them Confeſſors and Martyrs in this Cauſe.—When theſe Things are recollected, it will not, I hope, be inſinuated, that I have "ſo treated of the Miracles done ſince the Apoſtolick Times, "as to throw inſuperable Difficulties on thoſe of our Sa-"viour and his Apoſtles;" or that any farther* Criteria *are wanting "to ſhew the Difference, as to Credibility be-"tween* Heathen *and* Popiſh *Miracles, and thoſe of the "Fathers." (P. 102.)*

However, the Caution againſt ſo treating of the Miracles of the Primitive Church as to hurt the Credit of the Apoſtolick ones, is, I confeſs, reaſonable and important; and I deſire to recommend it to the Advocates on the other Side. The Gentleman, whom I have taken the Liberty here to differ from in ſome Particulars, has exerted Himſelf in a Chriſtian-like Manner to this Purpoſe, and his Example deſerves the Imitation of thoſe who eſpouſe Dr. M's Cauſe. The main Point in Queſtion having been differently repreſented as to its Connection with the Truth of Chriſtianity, and it having, as Occaſion ſerved, been conſidered as a Point of great Conſequence, or of no Conſequence to that Cauſe, I ſhall hope to be indulged a Word or two more on that Subject.

Dr. M's Poſition conſidered ſimply and abſtractedly by itſelf no way affects the Truth of the Goſpel. God Almighty might, if it had ſo pleaſed Him, have endued the Apoſtles with the Power of working Miracles, and not have continued the ſame Power to their Succeſſors. And in this Caſe

the

the Truth of Chriſtianity would have been ſufficiently ſupported on the Foundation of thoſe Miracles wrought by Chriſt and his Apoſtles without the Aid of ſubſequent Miracles. But when We view the Thing as it ſtands in its preſent Circumſtances; when We conſider that the ſame Fathers, who bear Witneſs to the Genuineneſs of the Goſpels, atteſt alſo ſtrongly and uniformly, that Miracles were continued in their Times; if it ſhould appear that They deceived Us in this Point, This muſt neceſſarily give Room to ſuſpect that They might alſo deceive Us in other Points. If it ſhould appear that the firſt Profeſſors and Teachers of Chriſtianity were all Fools *or* Knaves *(and ſuch they muſt have been, if they all jointly and ſeparately atteſted as true what they knew, or might know to be falſe, and what, as ſome of them obſerve, Any One might at any Time be convinced of) this muſt unavoidably caſt no ſmall Diſcredit on their Religion itſelf.—Again, if We conſider the Point as maintained and urged by Dr. M. when We find the ſame Arguments uſed againſt* theſe *Miracles, which are brought by Infidels againſt* all *Miracles whatſoever; when many of his Objections ſeem equally, or almoſt equally, pointed againſt the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and no ſaving Clauſes or Reſtrictions added; when, inſtead of appearing concerned to defend Himſelf from ſuch an Imputation, He calmly replies,* Who can help it? *It is no Wonder that Any Good Chriſtian, who has any Concern for his Religion, ſhould be alarmed at ſuch an Attempt. Whatever therefore is inſinuated, We are not afraid of the Conſequences of Truth, nor do We deſire to ſupport it by Falſhood; but the proper Queſtion in this Caſe is,* What is Truth? *Whether it is true that Miracles ſubſiſted in the Ages ſpoken of: And in ſuch an Enquiry every good Reaſoner ought to be afraid of* Conſequences. *If We can prove by juſt Conſequences, that any Poſition interferes with any known Truth, We thereby prove ſuch Poſition to be falſe: If We prove it to interfere with any Principle profeſſed and allowed by an Opponent, We prove againſt Him, at leaſt ſo far as to convict Him of Inconſiſtency.*

A FULL

A

FULL and FINAL

REPLY, &c.

IT is, to me at leaſt, no acceptable Task to continue a Controverſy with any, who maintain and enforce the great and fundamental Doctrines and Precepts of Chriſtianity. The *Importance* of thoſe Truths which we agree in, and of thoſe Hopes which we jointly purſue, ſhould unite us cloſely to each other, and make us deſirous to avoid thoſe Petulancies and unkind Reflections, which are apt to ariſe in the Progreſs of Diſputes of this Nature. Yet ſince I have accidentally been engaged in this Queſtion, and have ſeen no Reaſon to alter my Opinion upon it; ſince, to ſpeak freely, many Paſſages in Dr. *M*'s Performance do in my Judgment bear a very *unfriendly* Aſſpect, and have, however intended, been applied to a very ill Uſe, (having afforded in-

deed but too juſt Occaſion for ſuch Application) and ſince I am by no Means ſatisfied with the Vindication of his *Defender*, I am induced once more to review this Subject, and to offer my Reaſons, why I cannot acquieſce in this Defence.

Mr. *Toll* begins with a Reflection on me for paſſing over the *Introductory Diſcourſe*, without any Remarks on it, and objects to the Senſe of the Word in which I had aſſigned the Reaſon of it, *becauſe it had been conſidered by others*. If I had not meant, that it had in my Judgment been *ſufficiently conſidered*, this could have been no Reaſon for my paſſing over it; and therefore ſince my Meaning was plain, it was ſcarce worth while to remark on the *Warineſs* of the Expreſſion, where He knew no ſuch Warineſs was intended. Mr. *T.* indeed ventures to pronounce that the *Introductory Diſcourſe* has not been competently anſwered, nay, that very little has been produced in Confutation of it; but as This is not the only Point in which We differ in Opinion, I ſee no Reaſon to repent of my *Omiſſion*, ſince it is little likely that what I ſhould have offered on that Head would have been more ſatisfactory to Mr. *T.* than what I have urged againſt the *Free Inquiry* itſelf. And beſides that I thought, that it had been the Privilege of every

Writer,

Writer, to chuſe that Part of his Adverſary's Performance, which He thought moſt liable to Exception, without engaging to anſwer every other Treatiſe that He may have written in Relation to it; I ſtill think that in this particular Caſe it was the moſt *eligible* Method, both for the Eaſe of the Reader, and the Abbreviation of the Controverſy, (eſpecially after what had been written before) to proceed directly to the Conſideration of thoſe *poſitive Proofs*, on which this new Opinion was to be maintained. The Ingenious Author of the *View of the Controverſy*, (whoſe Performance I have very lately read with Pleaſure, tho' I cannot agree with Him in every Part of it) defends the *Introductory Diſcourſe* as being only a *general View of the Queſtion*, and a *Preſumption* of the Truth of it, and reminds Us, that Dr. *M.* Himſelf has explained the Deſign of it, as *diſpoſing us previouſly to ſuſpect* that the Pretence of Miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church was All but a Forgery. Now whilſt the *Introductory Diſcourſe* only was publiſhed, it was certainly worth while to obviate the Inſinuations contained in it, to leave the future Inquiry open, and to guard againſt Prepoſſeſſions, as well on the One Side as on the Other. And This Taſk was accordingly undertaken and executed at that Time by

other Hands. But when the *Free Inquiry* itſelf was made Publick, and the poſitive Arguments, which were to diſprove the Pretenſions of the Primitive Church to Miraculous Powers, were offered to Examination, I could not think it neceſſary to re-examine *Preſumptions* and *Suſpicions*, when the direct Queſtion, and all its Supports, lay now before Us, and remained at that Time unexamined. Had the ſame Hands undertaken this Part that did the former, Whatever Mr. *T.* might have ventured to pronounce concerning their Performances, I ſhould probably have acquieſced in them, and have continued as ſilent on this as on the former Occaſion.

From the Cenſure of this *ſuppoſed Omiſſion* Mr. *T.* proceeds to the Examination of that which I had excepted to in the *Preface*, as well as in the *Free Inquiry* itſelf. In the State of the Caſe, Dr. *M.* had obſerved, that " The preſent Queſtion concerning the " Reality of the Miraculous Powers of the " Primitive Church depends on the joint " Credibility of the Facts pretended to have " been produced by thoſe Powers, and of " the Witneſſes who atteſt them. If either " Part be infirm, their Credit, He ſays, muſt " ſink in Proportion, and if the Facts eſpe- " cially be incredible, muſt of Courſe fall " to the Ground," for which He adds a Reaſon,

Reaſon, " becauſe no Force of Teſtimony " can alter the Nature of Things." Now, as This Reaſon ſeemed to me to be capable of more Interpretations than One, I was deſirous to *aſcertain* the Meaning of it, that We might know, whether it was to be admitted or not, or what Force it might have in the preſent Argument; and to this End I propoſed two Senſes in which I thought it might be underſtood. Mr. *T.* obſerves upon the former of theſe, that I have " ſubſtituted other Words, which were none " of Dr. *M*'s," which is a Cenſure that I muſt be content to bear, having not yet learned the Art of explaining a *doubtful* Paſſage by only repeating the very Terms of it over and over again. But if This be plainly *one* Senſe in which the Words may be taken, if it be a *ſignificant* Interpretation of this Phraſe, that " no Force of Teſtimony " can alter the Nature of Things," to ſay that " it cannot make Falſehood to become " Truth;" then I may hope to ſtand excuſed for propoſing a *determinate* Meaning of the Sentence, inſtead of an *ambiguous* one. But Mr. *T.* adds, that This does not expreſs the Doctor's Meaning. Why then He is free from the Exceptions attending it, and We muſt look out for ſome other Senſe in which it is defenſible. And this Mr. *T.* ſupplies

Us with in the following Line. " No Force of Teſtimony, ſays the Doctor, can alter the " Nature of Things, that is, can make a " Thing credible that is in itſelf incredible." Now this, as explained by Mr. *T.* appears to me not to be the Doctor's Meaning, becauſe it ſeems inconſiſtent with the firſt Part of the Sentence, where the Queſtion was ſaid to depend on the *joint Credibility* of the Facts, and of the Witneſſes; whereas in this Senſe the latter are entirely excluded, and there is no Occaſion to enquire into, or Room to admit any Teſtimony to prove what thro' its *Incredibility* is ſuppoſed incapable of being proved. If by *Incredibility* was here meant *Impoſſibility*, This might be allowed; but this would fall in with the forementioned Interpretation rejected by Mr. *T.* that " no Teſ- " timony can make Falſehood to become " Truth;" and therefore He ſoftens the Uſe of the Term, and ſpeaks of theſe Things as *incredible*, " becauſe They are Trifling, " becauſe Ridiculous, becauſe to no Man- " ner of End or Purpoſe; and ſeveral ſuch " Dr. *M.* has produced," He ſays, " from " the early Ages upon the Authority of the " Fathers." We may obſerve however, that This is not pretended, or aſſerted of *all*, or of the *greater Part* of the Miracles of the Earlieſt Ages, and therefore, upon Suppoſition

ſition of the Truth of it, would upon the Whole be of little Service to his Argument.

But I do not think either Dr. *M*'s Aſſertion, or Mr. *T*'s Explanation of it in this Senſe to be clear of Difficulty, or free from Exception. There is not only great *Inaccuracy* in the Expreſſion in conſidering any Thing as *incredible*, without Regard to the Sufficiency or Inſufficiency of the *Teſtimony*, but great *Confuſion* in the Argument, and ſome *Danger* in the Conſequence. Tho' the Words are varied, yet I ſuppoſe that *Trifling* and *Ridiculous*, and *to no End or Purpoſe*, are all uſed to expreſs the ſame Thing, for a real Miracle, in whatever Inſtance it is exerted, cannot be ſubject to the two former Charges, any otherwiſe than as it is liable to the latter. If the *Occaſion* be worthy of a Divine Interpoſition, it is no more *Trifling* or *Ridiculous* to give a Human Voice to a Dumb Creature, than to ſend an Angelical Meſſenger from Heaven. The *Purpoſe* therefore, for which the ſuppoſed Miracle is wrought, ſeems to be the Point to which the Queſtion is to be reduced. And in this Senſe this Principle, that no Teſtimony can confirm any Point, which antecedently to the Conſideration of that Teſtimony, appeared to be *Trifling*, or *Ridiculous*, or to *no End and Purpoſe*, was That which prevented the Reception of

Chriſtianity at the firſt Publication of it, and has occaſioned the Apoſtacy of Many in later Ages. The Doctrines of the Incarnation, and of the Croſs, were *to the Jews a Stumbling Block, and to the Greeks Fooliſhneſs*, and therefore They neglected to look into the Evidence, as not allowing that any Teſtimony could confirm them. In the Judgment of our preſent Refined Reaſoners, They are ſtill eſteemed *Trifling* and *Ridiculous*, and therefore They ſuppoſe ſome Miſtake in the Evidence, tho' They know not where to fix it. The Truth is, We are weak, fallible, ſhort-ſighted Creatures, and often miſtaken in our Apprehenſions and Judgments of Things. *The Wiſdom of Men is Fooliſhneſs with God*, and one End of Miracles was to rouſe our *Attention* to Points, which otherwiſe might be thought not to deſerve it, and thereby to open our Eyes to the Intent of Divine Providence, and to ſhew Us our own *Ignorance* and *Preſumption*. When ſuch a Claim was made and offered fairly to Examination, it was eaſier, upon Enquiry, to judge of the Reality of it, than to know from previous rational Diſquiſitions, what Doctrines God muſt neceſſarily teach, or on what Occaſion He muſt interpoſe. If therefore Dr. *M.* by ſaying that "no Teſtimony "can alter the Nature of Things," did really mean

mean, that no Teſtimony could prove the Truth of that which did antecedently appear unlikely and unworthy of the Divine Interpoſition in the Judgment of Mankind, (for the Caſe of *Impoſſibility* is given up) then the Miracles, which He does admit, will refute his Principle, and We ſhall deſire to recall Him to his firſt State of the Caſe, to admit the *joint Credibility* of the Facts, and of the Witneſſes. Whatever is not *impoſſible* is capable of being proved. What *appears* to be abſurd, may appear to be otherwiſe upon farther Examination, and often has proved ſo in the Event. Divine Interpoſitions are not to be expected in common Caſes, nor are Miracles uſually offered to prove ſuch Points as are likely to be admitted without them. If the Thing be *improbable*, the Credibility of the Witneſſes ought to be the greater, yet it may certainly be eſtabliſhed, if the Evidence prove unexceptionable. In this Senſe, therefore it is not true, that " no Force of Teſtimony can " make a Thing credible that is in itſelf in- " credible;" for this *internal Incredibility* is afterwards explained into the Appearance of *Triflingneſs*, or *Ridiculouſneſs*, or *Uſefulneſs*; and ſuch *Appearances*, I ſay, may vaniſh upon Examination; and That which was highly *improbable* in itſelf (for This is Mr.

T's

T's Senſe of *Incredibility)* antecedently to give to the View of the Evidence, may upon that View become *morally certain.*

But after all, tho' This be Mr. *T*'s Senſe, I do not apprehend it to be Dr. *M's* Meaning in this Place. He may clear up this Point whenever He pleaſes, but in the mean Time, as I am willing to ſuppoſe Him to be *coherent* and *conſiſtent* in this Paragraph, his Words ſeem to require a different Interpretation. Such an emphatical Phraſe as this, that "no Force of Teſtimony can alter the "Nature of Things," ſhould imply ſomething much more, and much truer, than that Nothing can become credible upon the Proof of Witneſſes, which is not credible without it. But He Himſelf in the following Sentences aſcertains, I think, his own Meaning, and explains that *Incredibility*, which no Force of Teſtimony can alter. He magnifies the Credibility of *Facts* beyond that of *Witneſſes*, in that the former, He ſays, "cannot delude us, cannot ſpeak any other "Language, or give any other Information "but what flows from *Nature* and Truth." And that We might not miſapprehend Him, or be in Doubt *what Facts* He was ſpeaking of, He adds yet more explicitly, "The Teſ-"timony therefore of Facts, as it is offered "to our Senſes in this wonderful Fabrick and

"Con-

" Conſtitution of Worldly Things, may " properly be called the Teſtimony of God " Himſelf, as it carries with it the ſureſt In- " ſtruction in all Caſes, and to all Nations, " which in the ordinary Courſe of his Pro- " vidence He has thought fit to appoint for " the Guidance of Human Life." This Sentence Mr. *T.* confeſſes to have ſome *Obſcurity* in it, and therefore drops it; which is a very ſhort Method of *defending* one of the moſt exceptionable Paſſages in the Performance. But pray let it be conſidered, that it is introduced as an *Inference* from what went before, " The Teſtimony *therefore* of Facts, *&c.*" and that theſe Facts are deſcribed to be the Effects of Nature, exemplified in the Fabric and Conſtitution of Worldly Things, in Contradiſtinction to any ſuppoſed Reverſal of the Courſe of Nature; and then I ſhould be glad to ſee the Connection and Force of this Concluſion, from what He had aſſerted before, if He meant that Nothing that ſeemed *Trifling* or *Ridiculous*, or *Uſeleſs*, could be proved by any Teſtimony. But if He meant, that the Nature of Things, or the eſtabliſhed Courſe of it, was ſtronger than any Teſtimony could be of the Reverſal of it, then the intermediate Sentence, and this concluding One, are All *conſiſtent* therewith, and the *Conſequence* is true and juſt from the ſuppoſed

poſed Truth of the *Premiſes*. But then it would be eaſy to point to Paſſages in ſeveral late Advocates for Infidelity, who have aſſerted the ſame Thing almoſt in the ſame Words; and Nothing can be more obvious, than that ſuch a Principle would ſupport their Cauſe, and undermine the Belief of all miraculous Interpoſitions. Such Parallels Mr. *T.* will ſay are invidious, for "He cannot "but think it great Want of Candor to ſup-"poſe that Dr. *M.* had any Intention to in-"validate the Teſtimony of the Apoſtles, "when He has ſo many Times over, and "in ſuch expreſs Terms admitted miraculous "Powers to have been exerted by them." One ſhould have thought, that I had obviated this Reflection by ſaying in the very Place referred to, that "I would not charge "this as the poſitive *Deſign* of the Author, "ſince it is inconſiſtent with his Con-"ceſſions in other Places;" and therefore I only pointed out the Conſequences of his Poſition, as deſtructive of his Faith; which Method muſt charitably ſuppoſe Him to be a Believer, by ſuppoſing that ſuch a View of the Argument would have its proper Effect on Him. The *Intention* of any Writer any farther than it is openly avowed, or betrayed by unneceſſary and ſtrong Indications, is a Point which I have neither Authority, nor

Incli-

Inclination to judge of, Be that to his own Heart, and to the Searcher of it. But the *Tendency* of any Writing We have more Liberty to judge of, and there can be no readier Way to convince a Religious Perſon of his Miſtake, than by ſhewing, that it would end in ſubverting the Principles, which He Himſelf maintains. Should I be ſo Unhappy as to drop any thing, which ſhould by Others be eſteemed inconſiſtent with the Evidence, or the Doctrine of Chriſtianity, I ſhould by no Means call it *Want of Candor* to have this Inconſiſtency pointed out to me, but ſhould think Myſelf obliged either to diſprove the Conſequence, or to retract the Principle. Such an Objection ſuppoſes the Perſon, to whom it is objected, to be in earneſt in the Profeſſion of his Faith, and owes its whole Force to his *preſumed* Sincerity.

However, neither muſt *Candor* blind our Eyes, nor make Us diſregard all *ſuſpicious* Paſſages, unneceſſarily inſerted, and frequently repeated, becauſe inconſiſtent with ſome other Profeſſions and Declarations. Some Caution muſt be uſed againſt Thoſe, who write under *Diſguiſe*; and tho' I earneſtly hope, that Dr. *M.* is not a Perſon of this Character, yet in an Age abounding with Writers of this Kind; it is *Want of Pru-*

dence

dence in Him to give ſuch Cauſes of Suſpicion, not *Want of Candor* in Others to point them out. He chooſes to diſtinguiſh Himſelf as One "not ſo ſcrupulous with Regard "to Conſequences, as Many of his Profeſſion "are apt to be," (Pref. P. 6.) and there is ſuch an inexcuſable Levity of Expreſſion, and ſo profeſſed a Diſregard to any Conſequences, "*how far ſoever they may reach*," in his After-Reply to the foreſeen Objection of this Kind, (P. 192, 193.) as may well put every Man on his Guard, who has the Cauſe of Chriſtianity at Heart, and conſiders the *Importance*, as well as the *Evidence* of it. Upon the Whole, I ſee not the leaſt Reaſon to recede from the Charge, which I had advanced on this Article. The Sentence referred to is either abſolutely *falſe*, or *foreign* to the Point. When He ſaid, that "The "Teſtimony of Facts, as it is offered to our "Senſes in this wonderful Fabrick and Con-"ſtitution of Things, may properly be call-"ed the Teſtimony of God Himſelf, as it "carries with it the ſureſt Inſtruction in all "Caſes, and to all Nations," had He ſtopped here, or had only added, "which He "has thought fit to appoint for the Conduct "of Human Life," This had had a due Connection in the Place it ſtands in, and an immediate Relation to the Argument, as amount-

amounting to a Denial of any ſupernatural Interpoſition. If this Objection be thought to be removed by the Inſertion of that Clauſe, *which God in the ordinary Courſe of his Providence has thought fit*, &c. then the Senſe will be, that the Courſe of Nature is the ſureſt Inſtruction, where no ſurer is offered by extraordinary Interpoſitions; which is at the beſt a *low* and *jejune* Truth, does not follow from any Thing which He had advanced before, nor has any Connection with the Argument, by which He was to prepare to diſprove the *Credibility* of the Miracles of the Primitive Church.

There is a moſt unaccountable Confuſion in the next Paragraph, and a Veil of Obſcurity thrown over a plain Argument, inſomuch that a Reader, without an Attentive Review of that Part of the *Free Anſwer*, to which it ſeems to be intended as an Objection, would ſcarce know, What was affirmed, or denied. Dr. *M.* had aſſerted, (Pref. P. 16.) that " if any Credit be due " to the Church Hiſtorians in this Caſe, it " muſt reach either to all, or none:" The Conſequence of which, I added, would be, that if He could diſprove any *One* Relation of this Kind, the *Reſt* would fall with it. But this I ſhewed to be unreaſonable, becauſe when Miracles were known to be frequent, falſe Preten-

Pretenſions to them were of Courſe likely to be made, and might ſometimes poſſibly be admitted unwarily by Thoſe, who had known many real Inſtances; ſo that amongſt many true Accounts ſome falſe ones might gain Credit, and be recorded with the others. I went on to conſider the Reaſon aſſigned by Dr. *M.* for giving Credit to all Hiſtorians, or none, namely, that "the Characters of "the Perſons atteſting, and the Nature of "the Things atteſted, were of equal Force "in all Ages as in One." Whether Dr. *M.* by the *Nature of the Things atteſted*, meant the Whole of the Accounts as every Way circumſtantiated, or only as being equally contrary to the Courſe of Nature, did not appear to me, and therefore I added, that the *Occaſion* of a miraculous Interpoſition was a Circumſtance of Importance, which yet certainly was not the ſame in all Inſtances. More directly to the Point I obſerved, that neither were the Characters of the *Perſons atteſting* abſolutely of equal Force. The *Poſt-Nicene* Fathers were in Point both of *Judgment* and *Integrity* leſs unexceptionable than their Predeceſſors. So long a Succeſſion of Miracles might probably incline them more to *Credulity*; and beſides, when Chriſtianity was once eſtabliſhed by the Civil Power, there were more Temptations, more temporal

ral Inducements to encourage a Belief of Miracles, than can be pretended, whilſt the Powers of the World were againſt them. Whilſt Perſecutions threatened the Church, a Man could have no View in claiming miraculous Powers, but that of promoting diſintereſtedly the Cauſe of Truth: He could have no Expectation in this World, but that of bringing down the ſpeedier and heavier Vengeance upon Himſelf. But when *Honours* and *Profits* attended the Profeſſion of this Religion, the Good, the Bad, and Thoſe of doubtful Characters, not diſtinguiſhed by Others, and perhaps ſcarce known to Themſelves, promiſcuouſly joined in it: Other Influences, beſides the Love of Truth, began to have their Weight. The Zeal of Many became more warm, but leſs pure, and the Deceitfulneſs of their Hearts gradually affected their Doctrines. Whilſt They were ſerving ſo *good a Cauſe*, They were ſometimes leſs ſcrupulous about the *Means*, and They had apparently an *Intereſt* to ſerve, by this Cauſe, which their poor perſecuted Anceſtors had not. Theſe are *abating* Circumſtances in the Characters of the After-Writers, and may well make Us more cautious and circumſpect in the Examination of their Reports.

But I added, that neither was the *Nature of the Things atteſted* the ſame, in the only Senſe in which I apprehended it could affect this Argument; the former ſpeaking of a *conſtant*, a *frequent* Exerciſe at leaſt of miraculous Powers reſiding among them; the latter only atteſting *particular* Facts, which, if true, were undoubtedly miraculous. This made a great Difference in the Caſe, and the Conſequence of this Difference was ſtill more material, in that the former were of Courſe more eaſy to be examined into, and were offered to View at a Time when the Power was on the Enemies Side, and They had all poſſible Advantages for Examination. What now does Mr. *T.* reply to theſe plain and important Diſtinctions, invalidating Dr. *M*'s Aſſertion, and ſhewing that ſome Credit may be given to *Some* of the Hiſtorians aſſerting miraculous Claims, tho' not equally to *All*, or in all Particulars? Why only, that He wants to know, "which of the "Hiſtorians He is to give Credit to, and "which not; and to diſtinguiſh exactly and "with Certainty between thoſe true and falſe "Miracles tranſmitted to Us upon the Cre-"dit of the ſame Hiſtorian." By *Exactneſs* and *Certainty* I ſuppoſe He does not mean more than the Nature of the Caſe will admit of, and then I anſwer, He muſt make Uſe

of

of his *Reaſon*, and judge by the ſame Rules that He would of other Hiſtorical Teſtimony; which will probably enable Him to diſtinguiſh betwixt the *true*, and the *falſe*, or the *miſtaken* Witneſs. But He adds, "if "Either the true or falſe Miracles related by "theſe Hiſtorians are to make Part of "his Belief, He muſt have ſome ſure Rule "and Method of diſcerning them apart; if "no ſuch Rule or Method be afforded Him, "He muſt conclude it to be a Matter quite "indifferent, whether He believes any of "them." One ſhould have thought by this Inſinuation (which occurs again in the Performance) that He had been arguing againſt One, who had made this Point a *neceſſary Article* of Faith; which is ſuch a Miſrepreſentation as is not eaſily to be excuſed; I have no where given any Ground for any ſuch Charge. I am firmly perſuaded, that a Man may be, I have not the leaſt Doubt but that Mr. *Toll* is, a *ſincere and good Chriſtian*, tho' He does not believe any of the Miracles of the Primitive Church; but I am as fully perſuaded that He is *miſtaken* in this Point, and that He is unwarily engaged in the Defence of an Author, whoſe Objections againſt theſe Miracles are ſo pointed, as to be equally ſubverſive of the Belief of all Miracles, and are underſtood to be ſo equally

by moſt of the Friends and Enemies of the Chriſtian Cauſe. This was the Reaſon of my interpoſing in this Diſpute, believing the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Church to be a *real* Truth, tho' not a *fundamental* one; and particularly apprehending Danger from the *Manner* in which Dr. *M.* has managed the Argument; being likewiſe more ſcrupulous with Reſpect to *Conſequences* than the Dr. profeſſes Himſelf to be. All Truths, as Mr. *T.* obſerves afterwards, are I doubt not, coincident with Each Other; and, I may add, do often contribute to the Illuſtration and Support of Each Other, eſpecially when relating ſo nearly to the ſame Subject; and therefore it may not be *quite ſo indifferent*, whether a Man believe any of theſe Miracles, tho' it is not required of Him as any *neceſſary* Article of Faith. But if any One does not diſcern this Diſtinction, if He writes like a Chriſtian, expreſſing a Regard for the *Importance* of the Goſpel, not throwing out needleſs Grounds of Suſpicion, or advancing Principles deſtructive of the Belief of all Miracles, but pointing to the Difference of the Evidence of thoſe wrought in the Time of the Apoſtles, and thoſe atteſted in After-Ages, far be it from me to caſt any Cenſure or remote Imputation

tion on ſuch a Writer, however I may differ from Him in Opinion.

Mr. *T.* goes on *enquiring* inſtead of *anſwering*. He "would fain ſee a clear and convincing Reaſon aſſigned, why We are to "truſt the Writers of the firſt or ſecond "Century, and reject thoſe of the Third, "or to admit the Teſtimony of the Third, and "reject that of the Fourth, and ſo on thro' "Every Age ſucceſſively down to the preſent, as it is deduced by the Romiſh "Church." Why the Writers of the *Firſt* Century were to be credited in Oppoſition to all Others, Dr. *M.* will teach Him, who inſiſts, that the *Apoſtles* were the *only* Writers at all in that Century, who made any mention of Miracles; ſo that this State of the Caſe in Mr. *T*'s Inquiry betrays great Want of Caution, and of Attention to the Doctrine of the Gentleman, whoſe Principles He has been pleaſed to eſpouſe. The Diſtinction demanded betwixt the *ſecond* and *third* Century in this Reſpect is likewiſe *imaginary*, and ſeems to imply an entire Unacquaintedneſs with this Controverſy; for I know of None, who have fixed on that Period for the Ceſſation of Miracles, admitting thoſe of the *ſecond*, and rejecting thoſe of the *third* Century. The Difference between theſe, and all After-Ages, is very conſiderable. Several

Reaſons may be aſſigned, and were aſſigned in ſeveral Parts of the *Free Anſwer*, why our Doubts might well commence from that Time, and why the Teſtimonies of the former Writers might be truſted, tho' thoſe of the ſucceeding ones might well be called in Queſtion. Whenever *Worldly Intereſt* is concerned in the Claim to Miraculous Powers, We may reaſonably begin to *ſuſpect* the Truth of them, altho' ſuch *Suſpicions* will not overbalance *poſitive Evidence*, where it is offered to publick Examination amongſt thoſe, whoſe equal Intereſt it was to diſprove it, and in ſuch a Situation ſtood the Teſt and was admitted. But when ſuch publick Examination is refuſed, our *Suſpicion* of the *Truth* of ſuch Claim improves into a poſitive *Aſſurance* of the *Falſity* of it, and We no longer ſcruple to pronounce againſt thoſe Miracles, which We are not permitted to inquire into; ſince it would have been equally to their Credit and Succeſs to have been offered to the ſtricteſt Scrutiny, if their Truth could have ſupported them under it. By theſe obvious Diſtinctions Mr. *T*'s Inquiries may reaſonably be anſwered, and He may be enabled to carry on his Inquiry, without Danger of Miſtake in any material Inſtance, thro' the ſeveral Ages of Chriſtianity, down to the preſent Claims of the Romiſh

Church.

Church. The Teſtimonies of thoſe Writers *preceding* the Civil Eſtabliſhment of our Religion, when their Lives and their Salvation depended on the Truth of what They ſaid, and when They challenged their Adverſaries to look as narrowly as They pleaſed into the Foundation of their Pretenſions, will be the more firmly eſtabliſhed; whilſt the modern Pretenſions of Papiſts will in the ſame View be immediately rejected; and the principal Caſes of Difficulty will be in thoſe Claims moſt nearly ſucceeding the Converſion of the Princes of the Earth; in which the Caſe will not be ſo clear on either Side; but Thoſe, who agree in the main Point of Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church, may reaſonably be ſuppoſed to differ in their Judgment of particular Inſtances.

Why theſe Diſtinctions repeatedly urged before, were paſſed over in Silence, and not ſhewn to be *erroneous*, or *frivolous*, but are called for again, as if no Notice had been taken of this Part of the Subject, I muſt leave Mr. *T.* to account for, and proceed with his Wiſhes and Inquiries. "It is to be wiſh-"ed," he ſays, "Mr. *D.* would lay down "the Bar at any particular Period of Time, "and tell Us, Hitherto We are to proceed "and no farther." Mr. *D.* does not take

upon Him ſo abſolutely to determine a Point, about which much wiſer Men have differed: But as far as his Opinion is worth conſidering, This Queſtion was anſwered beforehand by an explicit Declaration, that "it ſeems "moſt probable, that this Power gradually "decreaſed, and that occaſional Miracles for "particular Purpoſes laſted much longer than "what may ſtrictly be called *the Age of Miracles*; (P. 8.) that the moſt general Opinion "is, that they ceaſed upon the Civil Eſtabliſh-"ment of Chriſtianity; (*ibid.*) and that it "was the Credit of Thoſe Aſſertors alone of "Miraculous Powers, who wrote *before* the "Civil Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, which "I was concerned to defend." (P. 136.) May I not reaſonably enquire again in my Turn, Why this was not taken Notice of? or aſk Any One who had only read Mr. *T*'s Defence, Whether He could have believed, that I had been thus free and expreſs upon a Point, which this Gentleman's Wiſhes muſt ſuppoſe me to have omitted? I had added, that "the preciſe Duration of Miracles was "not in itſelf neceſſary to the Queſtion be-"fore Us, but might be determined diffe-"rently by Thoſe, who believe the main "Article." The *Reaſon* of this was ſo plain, that I did not think it neceſſary to enlarge on it. For if we can prove that the Teſtimo-

ny

ny given to ſome Miraculous Powers after the Days of the Apoſtles *is ſufficient* to confirm the Belief of them, and that the Pretenſions of Others in later Times *are not ſufficient* to that Purpoſe, the Queſtion will be ſufficiently eſtabliſhed againſt Dr. *M.* tho' We may not be able to fix in what exact Part of the intermediate Interval, thoſe Miraculous Powers were really withdrawn. Thoſe who are of Opinion, that Miracles ceaſed *immediately*, when the Rulers of the Earth became Chriſtians; and Thoſe who think They continued for a Century or two longer in the Church, may equally make good their Point againſt the Author of the *Free Inquiry*, however they may differ in a leſs material Point among themſelves. But Dr. *M.* it ſeems, thinks otherwiſe, and Mr. *T.* ſays, "offers ſeveral "very good Reaſons for his Opinion, which "Reaſons Mr. *D.* has not attempted to anſwer." As I was not conſcious of any ſuch wilful Omiſſion of this Kind, I re-examined the Paſſage referred to with ſome Curioſity, where I found theſe ſeveral very good Reaſons ſhrink into one only, and that founded on a miſtaken Suppoſition of confirming all the Doctrines and Uſages of thoſe Ages, in which theſe miraculous Powers were really continued. This likewiſe I had taken particular Notice of on another Occaſion, where

it was repeated and aſſerted in a ſtronger Manner, and had obſerved, that "this ſup-"poſed Connection might be ſerviceable to "the Cauſe of Popery, but was a Conceſſion "in which I thought he would not be joined "by any rational Proteſtant." (P. 56.) Dr. *M.* inſiſts on it as neceſſary to fix the preciſe Point of the Duration of Miraluous Powers, that We may know, "how far the Hand of "God continued to co-operate viſibly with "the Saints of thoſe Ages, by giving a Di-"vine Sanction to the Doctrines which they "taught, and the Rites which they eſtabliſh-"ed." (Pref. P. 16, 17.) And had Thoſe Saints Themſelves thus connected their Opinions or Practices with their miraculous Powers, and offered ſupernatural Evidence to confirm any new particular Doctrines or Rites, then the D's Arguments would have been ſomewhat to the Purpoſe; tho' not quite concluſive, unleſs they had likewiſe repreſented thoſe Doctrines and Rites as neceſſary to Salvation. But if they only pleaded their miraculous Powers in Confirmation of the Truth of the Goſpel; if they did not pretend, by Virtue of this Privilege, to be infallible or impeccable, then their Doctrines and Uſages will ſtill be liable to the Teſt of Reaſon and Revelation, and there will be no Neceſſity of aſcertaining the preciſe Period of all the true Miracles, in order

order to diſcern thoſe Truths which God has ſtamped with his Authority. Thoſe Writers will ſtill, eſpecially when They are *unanimous*, be the beſt Witneſſes what were the Doctrines and Diſcipline of the early Ages, (which is ſurely a Point deſerving of Conſideration) and their Teſtimony will be of Weight, whilſt it is found *conſiſtent* with Scripture, tho' it would be of no Force *againſt* the plain Senſe of it. Miraculous Powers, as I obſerved before on this Subject, did not preſerve all Thoſe who were endowed with them from *immoral* Practices, yet neither did They juſtify or extenuate them; but our Saviour ſpeaks of ſuch Perſons as finally condemned, *Matt.* vii. 23; and ſhould inexcuſable *Superſtitions* as well as *Immoralities* be found in any ſuch Perſons, the Anſwer and the Event would be the ſame; for thoſe very Miracles, which enabled them to prove the Truth of their Religion, did thereby aggravate their Guilt in any *unſuitable* Practices. The Caſe in which Dr. *M.* elſewhere choſe to illuſtrate the Force of this Argument of a ſuppoſed Connection betwixt their Miracles and their Doctrines or Rites, was that of the Veneration of Reliques. "It is to thoſe antient Tales" He ſays, "ſo gravely atteſted, of Miracles "wrought by the Bones of Saints and Mar-"tyrs, that the Church of *Rome* owes all that

"Trade

" Trade, which ſhe ſtill draws from the ſame
" Fund and Treaſure of her Wonder-working
" Reliques: And if We can believe ſuch
" Stories, as they are delivered to Us by the
" Primitive Writers, We cannot condemn
" a Practice which is evidently grounded
" upon them." (P. 25.) Now in the Firſt Place, the very earlieſt Mention of Miracles, wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs, is of ſo late a Date, as will no way affect the Queſtion as maintained by the Defenders of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Church till the Eſtabliſhment of it by Civil Authority; and therefore if his *ſuppoſed* Connection was never ſo *real*, this Inſtance could be of no Service to Him againſt the greater Part of his Oppoſers.

But let us farther examine the Strength of the Connection itſelf. Dr. *M.* ſays, " If We
" can believe ſuch Stories, as they are de-
" livered to Us by the Primitive Writers, We
" cannot condemn a Practice, which is evi-
" dently grounded upon them." That is, If We can credit thoſe antient Tales, as He calls them, ſo gravely atteſted, of Miracles wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs, We cannot blame the Church of *Rome* for the *ſuperſtitious* Adoration of thoſe Reliques, this Practice being evidently grounded on that Belief. But ſcarce any other Proteſtant I ſup-

poſe

poſe will join with Him in this, or think that the Church of *Rome* is not now to blame for the Worſhip of thoſe old rotten Bones, as Dr. *M.* expreſſes it, tho' thoſe Bones were ſuppoſed to be heretofore the Inſtruments of working miraculous Cures. This was advancing a Step farther than he had done in the *Introductory Diſcourſe*, or at leaſt farther than his able Advocate, the Author of the *View of the Controverſy*, choſe to underſtand or to defend Him. When ſeveral Writers had ſhewn the Unreaſonableneſs of inferring the *Worſhip* of Reliques from the Cures attributed to them, This Gentleman endeavours to ſhew that They miſunderſtood or miſrepreſented Dr. *M.* "The Thing "ſays He, to be attended to at preſent, is not, "whether Miracles wrought in any Age, are "Confirmations of the concurrent Uſages or "Practices of that Age, nor whether the "Obligation to the Adoration of Reliques, "will follow from Miracles being wrought "by ſuch Reliques. But whether Miracles "wrought in any Age, through, or by "Means of any Rite, upon Application to "God thro' that Rite; whether Miracles ſo "wrought are not to be conſidered as Confir-"mations of the Divine Approbation of the "Innocence or Lawfulneſs of ſuch Rite of "Application." (P. 11.) Again, "To in-"fer the Worſhip of Reliques, in the high

"Senſe

" Senſe of Worſhip, merely from Miracles " being wrought by them, is an Inference " too large; But we may infer the Lawfulneſs and Innocence of that Rite ſo far as it goes; which is all the Inference contended for (P. 15, 16.). This is repeated again and again, (P. 18, 34, 40, 43, 141.) as ſeveral Gentlemen had conſidered the Argument in the ſame Light. But now this Diſtinction and this Plea are waved by Dr. *M.* who here roundly aſſerts, that He was ſuppoſed to mean before, that if We can believe thoſe ancient Tales of Miracles wrought by the Bones of Saints and Martyrs, We cannot condemn the preſent Practice of the Church of *Rome*, which is evidently (evidently He muſt mean in *Reaſon*, not in *Fact* only, otherwiſe We might condemn it) grounded upon them.

Now the Grounds on which We think that tho' We ſhould admit thoſe ancient Tales, yet We may condemn the preſent Practice of the Church of *Rome*, that is as Dr. *M.* explains it, " The Trade which She ſtill " draws from the ſame Fund and Treaſure " of her Wonder-working Reliques," are plainly theſe, that if ever Miracles were worked by ſuch Reliques, yet they have long ſince ceaſed; and that even if they had continued, yet they would not have juſtified the ſuperſtitious and idolatrous Regard now paid by the Church

Church of *Rome* to the Reliques themſelves. The Author of *the View* thus limits his Aſſertion, that "Miracles wrought in any Age, "through or by Means of any Rite, upon Ap"plication to God thro' that Rite, are to be "conſidered as Confirmations of the Divine "Approbation of the Innocence or Lawful"neſs of ſuch Rite of Application, provided "always that no Mark or Intimation of the "Diſapprobation of the Rite be, or hath been "given (P. 11.). This is certainly a very juſt Diſtinction, and therefore a Diſapprobation having been expreſſed in clear Terms, of all *Creature-Worſhip*, the Practice of the *Romiſh* Church muſt be condemned, even tho' They had ſtill miraculous Powers reſiding among them to be wrought by Means of ſuch Reliques. This Argument therefore is of Weight againſt Dr. *M*'s unlimited Aſſertion, tho' not againſt his more wary Advocate; who elſewhere adds, that "to ſay that They cannot "defend by theſe Means, the Worſhip of "Reliques, in the high Senſe of Worſhip, "(a Practice They diſclaim) is ſaying No"thing, if We leave them in Poſſeſſion of "a Proof of that ſuperſtitious Veneration and "Mediatorial Application, the Practice of "which They acknowledge and contend for, "and which are Rites ſufficiently unlawful." (P. 19.) As to their Diſclaiming the high

Senſe

Senſe of Worſhip, They do indeed diſclaim it juſt as the *Wiſer Heathens* did, by Evaſions and Diſtinctions which They learned from them, and which would be of equal Force to acquit the former as the latter from the Charge of Idolatry; for No One who has been amongſt them, can I think be inſenſible, that They do as really and truly worſhip their Reliques and Images as their *Pagan* Anceſtors did. As to *Superſtitious Veneration*, and *Mediatorial Application*, which are pronounced to be Rites ſufficiently unlawful; theſe are Words of more doubtful Signification, and ſhould be more clearly aſcertained, that Thoſe, who agree in Opinion, may not diſpute about Expreſſions. I have no other or clearer Notion of *Superſtition*, than that it is *Miſplacing* our Devotion on *wrong* Objects without Authority, or *over-valuing* Right, but *leſs important* Practices, farther than Reaſon or Revelation will warrant. Whatever goes *againſt* expreſs Direction is *irreligious*, and deſerves a worſe Name than *Superſtition*. *Veneration* is a more uncertain Term, and may mean a Reſpect greater or leſs, faulty or innocent, juſt according to the other Words to which it is joined, or the Methods in which it is expreſſed. This Gentleman I obſerve once uſes it to mean no more than the Application of the Relique for the

ſuppoſed

ſuppoſed Cure to be wrought by it, which he calls " the Rite of touching or venerating " dead Mens Bones;" (P. 16.) *Mediatorial Application* ſounds high, and might ſeem to imply a forbidden Practice, but, as elſewhere explained by this Gentleman, it means no more than *the Method of applying* to God for a Cure by the *Uſe* of ſuch an Inſtrument, as a ſupernatural Power is ſuppoſed to be annexed to. Now This Gentleman, ſays, and I think ſays rightly, that from the ſuppoſed Reality of the Miracle We may infer the Lawfulneſs and Innocence of the Rite ſo far as it goes, and therefore ſay I, in ſuch ſuppoſed Caſe, it would not be any *ſuperſtitious Veneration*, that is not any *groundleſs Reſpect* without Authority, nor any *faulty Mediatorial Application* to make Uſe of ſuch an Inſtrument to our own Benefit, to which Providence had ſo viſibly annexed ſo ſupernatural a Power. But this, ſays this Author " appears to Him to be a direct " Conceſſion in Support of the like ſuperſti- " tious Rites uſed in the Church of *Rome*." (P. 44.) It appears to me to be directly otherwiſe, becauſe whether Miracles were wrought or not by theſe Means in the *early Ages*, We are ſatisfied that they are *not* wrought ſo *now*; and therefore theſe Rites and Applications are not eſtabliſhed now by the ſame Authority that they are ſuppoſed to be then.

The Whole of this Veneration and Application depends on the Evidence of the *Reality* of the Miracle; It is *Superſtition* to apply to ſuch a Method of Cure *without* expreſs Warrant, but *with* it, certified by ſuch ſupernatural Interpoſition, ſuch Application would be ſufficiently juſtifiable. And what Advantage can *Popery* gain by this Conceſſion? It will reſt on them to prove the *Certainty* of thoſe pretended Miracles wrought by Reliques; and could they prove that Point, all that would be allowed in Conſequence would be the *Lawfulneſs* of uſing and applying them, and ſuch a Veneration, Regard, and Eſteem for them as is anſwerable to the Value that We put on any other *inſtrumental* Cauſes of important Bleſſings. But ſince the Firſt Point is the *Proof* of the *Reality* of the Miracles, here We may ſecurely reſt, and may challenge them to exhibit them to publick Examination; after which this Gentleman will agree with me, that the very Occaſion of the Diſpute will be cut off concerning the Degree of the Regard due to Reliques, on the Suppoſition of miraculous Cures being wrought by them.

He preſents Us however with a parallel Inſtance, (P. 13,) which I chuſe to conſider as Inſtances do uſually beſt illuſtrate ſuch Arguments, and becauſe the very ſame has been

been introduced by Others on this Subject. It relates to the *Royal Touch* for the Cure of the King's Evil. For my own Part, I am ready to own that I have no Faith in this as a ſupernatural Endowment for this plain Reaſon amongſt others, that if ſome Cures have indeed been wrought by it, yet in other Caſes it has moſt certainly proved ineffectual: Now the *Succeſs* in *ſome* Inſtances may be accounted for without a Supernatural Interpoſition; the *Failure* in *Any* cannot I think be accounted for upon that Suppoſition.—But admitting the Facts, He aſks, Does God approve of this Rite as lawful, or does He not? He has a Reply ready for the Determination on either Side; but I find no Difficulty in anſwering directly, that on Suppoſition of the Fact of a ſupernatural Virtue annexed to this Touch, God Almighty does certainly approve of this Rite as *lawful*, Nor do I foreſee any Inconvenience in the only Principle, on which He ſays this can be defended, namely "by alledging the Cures ſuppoſed to be gi-"ven in Evidence of the Divine Approbation "of this Rite, no Mark of Diſapprobation appearing." But, He ſays, that "this Prac-"tice ſeems to carry rather more Superſtition "in it than touching the Reliques of a Saint "or a Martyr, (for Kings are not always "either the One or the Other)" I anſwer

that according to my Notion of *Superſtition*, which is aſcribing more Virtue or Merit to any Thing than Reaſon or Revelation will warrant, there could be no *Superſtition* at all in applying to the *Royal Touch* for a Cure, if it were unqueſtionable that Providence did thereby grant miraculous Cures; ſince ſuch continued Miracles would be Warrant ſufficient for ſuch Application; for God Almighty certainly would not offer Us ſupernatural Bleſſings in a Way in which it would be Unlawful for Us to accept them. I ſee not the Appearance of any Doubt about the *Lawfulneſs* of this Rite, if it were thus viſibly diſtinguiſhed by ſuch important Effects; for ſurely there is no Prohibition againſt embracing miraculous Cures from any Perſons, who may be commiſſioned to adminiſter them; much leſs can I ſee how there ſhould be *more* Superſtition in this Practice than in touching the Reliques of a Saint or Martyr; ſince the humbleſt Expreſſions of *Civil* Homage to a *Living Prince*, would be leſs liable to be interpreted into *Idolatrous* Devotion than the Reſpect and Veneration ſhewn to *Dead Mens Bones*. The Point of *Saintſhip* is out of the Queſtion in this Caſe, ſince We ought not to worſhip Any of what Characters ſoever; and beſides We may be miſtaken in *Dead* as well as *Living Saints*, or at leaſt in

the Reliques belonging to them. I cannot ſee therefore what Advantage *Popery* could make of this Conceſſion, or how the *Veneration*, that is the *Uſe* of Rites, to which miraculous Powers were annexed, could be proved to be unlawful, on Suppoſition of the clear Evidence of the Fact. In the forementioned Inſtance I ſhould not *worſhip* either the *King*, or his *Hand*, if I applied to his *Touch* for the Cure of my Diſtemper, nor would it be a *ſuperſtitious Veneration* to reſpect a Perſon endowed with ſuch a Virtue, as an extraordinary Inſtrument of Providence for the Benefit of his Fellow-Creatures.

There is an incautious Phraſe uſed at firſt by Dr. *M.* and repeated by the *Author of the View*, which ſeems to have given Riſe to all the Difficulty that has been ſtarted on this Point. " If," ſays the Dr. " We admit the " Miracles, We muſt neceſſarily admit the " Rites, for the Sake of which they were " wrought." (P. 66. Introd. Diſc.) Now I know no reaſonable Senſe in which it can be ſaid that the Miracles were wrought *for the Sake* of the Rites. On Suppoſition again of the Fact, the Aſſiſtance was given for *the Sake of Mankind*; It was given in this extraordinary Manner for *the Sake of God's Glory*, to confirm the Truth of a Revelation which He had graciouſly vouchſafed to the World. The

Manner in which, and the *Inſtrumentality* by which ſuch Miracles were wrought, were equally eaſy and indifferent to the Almighty Worker of them, who could with equal Facility work them inſtantaneouſly, without any intermediate Cauſes; but certainly the *End* cannot in any Senſe be ſaid to be wrought for the *Sake of the Means*. If indeed there had been an expreſs declared Connection, that Miracles ſhould be wrought by ſuch Reliques, to prove that *Adoration* or *Veneration* was to be paid to them, then they might have been ſaid to have been wrought *for their Sakes*, for in this Caſe the Miracles would have been the *Means*, and the Worſhip of Reliques the *End*; but no ſuch Connection is pretended; and the bare Allowance of the *Lawfulneſs* of a Rite no where prohibited, whilſt miraculous Powers can be proved to be annexed to it, is a Conceſſion from which I am not in the leaſt apprehenſive of any ill Conſequence. Could undoubted Proof be given of the Working of Miracles by *Reliques*, I ſhould be ſo far from thinking it to be *for their Sake*, that I ſhould rather ſuppoſe that ſuch *contemptible* Inſtruments were made Uſe of to prevent the Danger of any Abuſe of them, and to yield the clearer Proof of a *miraculous Interpoſition*, when ſuch *unlikely* Means were employed to illuſtrate

illuſtrate the Divine Power, which muſt be known to have no Virtue in Themſelves.

Upon the whole, whether the Miracles ſaid to be wrought at the Tombs and by the Reliques of Martyrs deſerve Credit, is a Queſtion which does not concern thoſe who are defending the Miracles of the three firſt Centuries; but it concerns the Argument, as Dr. *M.* has managed it, to obſerve, that ſuppoſing thoſe Miracles to have been really wrought, This could no Way juſtify the Worſhip of thoſe Martyrs, or their Reliques, any more than the Cures wrought by St. *Paul*'s *Handkerchief* could be a Reaſon for worſhipping either St. *Paul*, or his *Handkerchief*. Thoſe, therefore, who admit the Truth of thoſe Miracles, may notwithſtanding very conſiſtently condemn the ſuperſtitious Practices of the Church of *Rome*, and reject her pretended Miracles; it being no Objection againſt the Reality of thoſe early Miracles, that Weak or Wicked Men took Occaſion from thence to introduce Superſtition and Idolatry, or to invent forged Miracles. I have been led into theſe Reflections from Mr. *Toll*'s Charge of a former *Omiſſion*, not from any officious Deſire of oppoſing the *Author of the View*, &c. whom it would be more Pleaſure to me to concur with in Opinion. But I do not ſee the Force of Dr. *M*'s Argument for fixing the

preciſe Period of miraculous Powers, in order to confirm the Doctrines or Uſages of the ſeveral Ages, which muſt be judged of by other Rules, and muſt ſtand or fall by the Teſt of *Scripture* or *Reaſon.* In the Inſtance aſſigned with Reſpect to *Reliques*, the Worſhip or undue Veneration of them, as *Objects of Devotion*, was at all Times unlawful; and the Uſe and Application of them as *Means of Cure*, were ſo far innocent and allowable as, and no farther than miraculous Powers could be proved to be worked by them, whatever that preciſe Period may be ſuppoſed to be.

Mr. *T.* chuſes to paſs over the Objections to the remaining Parts of Dr. *M*'s Preface, " becauſe every Thing material," He ſays, " will occaſionally fall in the Courſe of his Re- " marks." (P. 9.) I cannot help thinking that it would have been material to have vindicated ſome other obnoxious Paſſages which I had pointed to, and where the poor Plea of *Obſcurity* will not ſatisfy; where his Arguments mean Nothing, or worſe than Nothing; and where the Belief of Miracles is repreſented as a *Deſertion of the Path of Nature* and *Experience*, and a Contradiction to that " Revelation which the Creator made " of Himſelf from the Beginning placed " continually before our Eyes in the won- " derful

" derful Works and beautiful Fabric of this " viſible World." However ſomewhat is here added, which I ſhall not paſs over. I was arguing from Dr. *M*'s own Conceſſions; and in particular from his Account of the Deſign of Miracles, that " they were " given to enable the firſt Preachers more " eaſily to over-rule the inveterate Prejudices " both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and to " bear up againſt the diſcouraging Shocks " of popular Rage and Perſecution," Mr. *T.* replies, " Dr. *M.* does not allow, nor do " I think that the rooting out inveterate Pre- " judices, without Reſtriction and Limita- " tion to Times and Circumſtances, is a ſuf- " ficient Occaſion for them" (P. 10.). But the very Point which I had in View was to ſhew, that the Reſtrictions and Limitations expreſſed by Dr. *M.* were of no Advantage to his Argument, as not *confining* the Occaſion for Miracles to the *Apoſtolical Age*, ſince according to Dr. *M*'s own Words " Chriſ- " tianity had not at that Time gained an " Eſtabliſhment in every Quarter of the " known World"; and in particular I obſerved, that the *ſevereſt* Perſecutions were after the Days of the Apoſtles, ſo that in this Reſpect Miracles might even ſeem *more neceſſary* in the ſucceeding Ages, till the Civil Eſtabliſhment of this Religion. To this His

Defender

Defender anſwers Nothing, but goes on to repeat an Objection which I had expreſsly obviated without vouchſafing to take any Notice that it had been anſwered beforehand. He ſays, that " on the Suppoſition that the " rooting out of inveterate Prejudices were " a ſufficient Occaſion for them, We are " abſolutely ſure, that the Reaſon of Mira- " cles, *nor* (I ſuppoſe He meant *and)* con- " ſequently Miracles themſelves, can never " ceaſe as long as the World laſts." *(ibid.)* I had particularly ſhewn, that this Way of Reaſoning would not hold, for that We enjoy ſeveral Advantages at this Day for the Propagation of the Goſpel amongſt the Heathens, which were wanting at the firſt Publication of it, and that therefore We ſtood leſs in Need of ſupernatural Aſſiſtance for that Purpoſe. This Gentleman does not ſo much as attempt to invalidate theſe Diſtinctions, but only ſays, that " whatever We " may in Speculation fancy poſſible to be " done by the Force of Human Means, is " found in Fact and Experience to be totally " ineffectual" (P. 11.). Here again I muſt take the Liberty to diſſent from Him. All poſſible Human Means have not been tried to propagate Chriſtianity, and therefore We cannot pronounce upon the *Fact*, that they are found to be totally ineffectual. Were

Men

Men half as much in earneſt about the *religious*, as They are about the *political* State of the World; were They as ſolicitous to extend the Knowledge and Practice of *Chriſtian Duties*, as They are to promote *Trade and Commerce*, much might probably be done this Way. The Succeſs of the Endeavours of the *Society for propagating the Goſpel* has ſhewn, that the Truths of the Goſpel, when fairly propoſed, without Diſguiſe or Addition, have been often able to make their Way into prejudiced Minds; and were thoſe charitable Endeavours univerſal, the happy Effect might reaſonably be hoped to be more general alſo. The preſent Darkneſs and Ignorance of ſo great a Part of Mankind is owing very much to the *Neglect* of Human Means, and were there all proper Charity, Zeal and Diligence uſed in this Behalf, there would be much leſs Occaſion for miraculous Aſſiſtance than at preſent there may appear to be. Mr. *T.* adds, that "there does not ſeem at preſent any Likeli-"hood that the Converſion of all Thoſe, "who reject Chriſtianity, ſhould be brought "about by any Thing leſs than miraculous "Power." Nor do I think it probable, that the Converſion of *all* would be brought about by that. There were Thoſe who rejected the Evidence of Miracles in our Saviour's

viour's Time; and I make no doubt but that the ſame Diſpoſitions would contrive to evade the ſame Evidence, if it was now offered. But the Queſtion is, Whether there are not *more probable* Hopes of Succeſs, more Advantages on the Side of the Miſſionaries, and fewer or leſs Impediments on the Part of the Hearers, in the preſent State of the World, than at any Time of the firſt Publication of Chriſtianity, before it was received and eſtabliſhed in any Country? The Criminal Indolence and Indifference of Chriſtian Nations, more ready to contend about ſecular Intereſts than to agree in promoting their Common Faith, will not ſuffer Us to judge by *Fact* what can be done towards the Converſion of Unbelieving Nations by all poſſible Human Means; but We can only judge by *Reaſon*, whether there are not more probable Grounds to hope for Succeſs without the Aid of Miracles *now*, than *before* any Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity. Here the Diſtinctions before offered come in full to the Point, but as they remain unconſidered by the *Defender*, they need not be repeated or reinforced. He adds however, inſtead of a Confutation of my Reaſons, or a Propoſal of any contrary ones, his own Opinion as a poſitive Argument. "So that no Argument *a* "*Priori* can I think be drawn for the Ne-

"ceſſity

"ceſſity of Miracles in the ſecond and third "Centuries, with Reſpect to *Unbelievers*, "but what is as Good and in as full Force "*Now* as it was *Then*" *(ibid.)*. If any Attempt of a Proof of this had been offered in Oppoſition to what I had before obſerved, I ſhould have taken it into Conſideration; but ſhall now leave Mr. *T.* to enjoy his own Thought, and ſhall only add, that my Arguments were founded on that Obſervation of Dr. *M.* which I take to be the beſt in his whole Performance; that "it is raſh "and preſumptuous to decide upon the "Views and Motives of the Deity by the "narrow Conceptions of Human Reaſon." I have no Notion of putting *Ourſelves* in the Place of our *Maker*, and determining what He *muſt do* upon any Exigency. An Argument *à Priori* for the *Neceſſity* of Miracles was particularly guarded againſt by an expreſs Declaration, that "We cannot in-"deed determine antecedently concerning "the *Neceſſity* of Miracles in ſuch and ſuch "particular Caſes, but We may ſubſequent-"ly offer ſuch Arguments for the *Propriety* "*of a Divine Interpoſition*, where there is "due Evidence for it;" (See *Free Anſwer*, P. 12.) and therefore why Mr. *T.* choſe to expreſs Himſelf again in this Manner, I do not know.

The

The whole of the State of this Caſe is this, Dr. *M.* allows that Miracles were wrought by our Saviour, and his Apoſtles, and ſome of the firſt Chriſtians in the Apoſtolical Age; He allows that they were wrought to enable the Firſt Preachers to root out Prejudices, and bear up againſt Perſecutions; and He acknowledges it farther as a *Poſtulatum*, which all will grant, that theſe miraculous Powers laſted as long as they were neceſſary to the Church. "But when the firſt and principal "Difficulties were conquered--when Churches "were planted in all the chief Cities of the "*Roman* Empire, it may reaſonably be pre-"ſumed, that as the Benefit of miraculous "Powers began to be leſs and leſs wanted in "Proportion to the Increaſe of thoſe Churches, "ſo the Uſe and Exerciſe of them began "gradually to decline; and as ſoon as Chriſtia-"nity had gained an Eſtabliſhment in every "Quarter of the known World, that they "were finally withdrawn; and all this He "thinks may probably be thought to have "happened whilſt ſome of the Apoſtles were "ſtill Living." (Pref. P. 28, 29.) It ſeemed proper therefore to obſerve, that this was a Miſtake in *Fact*, that this Occaſion for miraculous Powers was not *peculiar* to the *Apoſtolical Age*, that there was no ſuch Diſtinction in Favour of that particular Period to which he has

has confined them, nor any Preſumption againſt the Continuance of Miracles in ſucceeding Ages, if there ſhould appear to be other Evidence of ſuch Continuance of them; but that this Diſtinction does very remarkably and forcibly return from the Time of the Civil Eſtabliſhment: after which it ſeemed reaſonable to be leſs in Expectation of *Miracles*, when *Human Means* grew more powerful and ſufficient.

Mr. *T.* adds, "as to the Uſe of Miracles "for the Support and Encouragement of *Be-* "*lievers*, if their Trials were greater in "thoſe Days of Perſecution, their Supports "were ſo too. They lived ſo near the "Fountain-Head of *Miracles*, that ſome of "them no Queſtion had Themſelves been Eye-"Witneſſes of ſeveral wonderful Works, many "more had converſed with thoſe who had been "Eye-Witneſſes of them, by which We may "ſuppoſe ſo ſtrong a Conviction to be wrought "in their Hearts of the Divine Original of the "Religion they profeſſed, as, together with "the extraordinary Aids of God's Holy Spi-"rit, might enable them to undergo the "moſt ſevere Puniſhments that could be in-"flicted upon them with Steadineſs and Re-"ſolution." (P. 11, 12.) Whatever Force there may be thought to be in this Obſervation, it cannot affect the chief Part of the Time

Time preceding the Civil Eſtabliſhment of Religion. Thro' more than half the Second Century, and all the Third, there could be None who had ſeen, or converſed with thoſe who had ſeen any Miracle wrought, if they were really confined to the Apoſtolical Age. But Mr. *T.* adds farther, that ſome Perſons have in all Ages endured Martyrdom as courageouſly as the Primitive Sufferers could do: "Which known and inconteſtable Facts, He "ſays, ſeem entirely to deſtroy the Argument "for the Neceſſity of Miracles with Regard "to Believers." This Obſervation again is juſt of as much Force againſt his Friend Dr. *M*'s Opinion, as againſt his Oppoſers; for if Men have in all Ages been enabled to endure the ſevereſt Perſecutions even to the moſt cruel Deaths, without miraculous Aſſiſtance, why was it neceſſary that any Miracles ſhould be wrought for their Support at *any Time*, and eſpecially in the *Apoſtolical Age*, when according to Mr. *T*'s preceding Obſervation, they had ſuch an Opportunity of ſeeing other Miracles, as might be ſuppoſed to work ſuch a ſtrong Conviction in their Hearts, as together with the extraordinary Aids of God's Holy Spirit, might be ſufficient to ſupport them? Yet the Dr. aſſigns this as one Reaſon for the granting of miraculous Powers in the Apoſtolical Age, "to enable the firſt

"Preachers

" Preachers to bear up againſt the diſcouraging
" Shocks of popular Rage and Perſecution,
" which they were taught to expect in this
" Noviciate of their Miniſtry." (Pref. 28.)
Conviction was by no Means the only Point neceſſary to this Purpoſe. Thoſe who as firmly *believed* the Truth of the Goſpel, as Others who *reſiſted unto Blood, ſtriving for it*, did yet ſometimes fall away in the Day of Perſecution. Their *Fears* got the better of their *Reaſon*; They retained their Faith tho' they loſt their Virtue, and were *ſelf-condemn'd* in their Want of Reſolution. In ſuch an Exigency an immediate Miracle might apparently be of great Service, not to *convince* them of what they firmly *believed* before, but to *remind* them of the *Importance* of that Faith, to quicken their Thoughts and Affections, and to open Heaven to their View, when the Terrors of the Earth were likely to engroſs their Attention, and overſet their better Deſigns. Why God Almighty granted this Privilege to *ſome Perſons*, and not to *others*, why at *ſome Times*, and not at *others*, We are not qualified to determine. He ſees the *Hearts* of all his Servants, and knows the *Whole* of their Difficulties and Advantages, and therefore is alone able to judge when ſuch external Interpoſitions are uſeful and ſeaſonable. It may be proper however to obſerve, that his *ſupernatural*

Aſſiſtance of his faithful Diſciples may be as *real* and *effectual*, whether it be thus *externally* teſtified or not; which is what I ſuppoſe Mr. *T.* himſelf allows and intimates, when he ſpeaks of Conviction, "together with the extraordinary Aids of God's Holy Spirit," as ſufficient to ſupport the Martyrs. God Almighty may, by an *extraordinary Act of his Holy Spirit*, impreſs at once as ſtrong and warm a Senſe of Heavenly Promiſes and Comforts on the Mind of the Sufferer, as ſuch an *outward Miracle*, if really wrought, would Occaſion; and in ſuch Caſe the *Aſſiſtance* and *Event* would be the ſame, as if He had openly wrought ſuch a Miracle in their Favour. Why his infinite Wiſdom chuſes ſometimes to interpoſe thus publickly and outwardly, ſometimes inwardly and ſecretly in Behalf of his Servants, is beſt known to his own Counſels; but in ſuch ſuppoſed Caſes it is plain that the Martyrs may be *equally* dealt with, whilſt to Spectators They are very *unequally* treated; and We with equal Ignorance and Preſumption are examining and wondering, why Miracles ſhould be wrought in Favour of Some, and not of Others. This Difference of Diſpenſations is probably ordered ſo as may beſt anſwer the farther Deſigns of Providence; and the external Manifeſtation at any Time of ſupernatural Aſſiſtance, may be intended as

well for the *Inſtruction* of Others, as the *Support* of the Sufferers. What I would upon the Whole obſerve from hence is, that as We cannot argue, antecedently in this Caſe, any more than in the former, *for the Neceſſity* of Miracles to ſupport Believers under Perſecution, ſo neither can We determine *againſt the Expediency* of them to this Purpoſe; nor is this Conſideration, that Some have endured Martyrdom *without* the Aſſiſtance of Miracles, any Manner of Prejudice to the Evidence that may be offered, that Others in particular Inſtances *have been favoured* with them.

We are now come to the Re-examination of the Free-Inquiry. Dr. *M*'s Firſt Obſervation was, that "in all the ſeveral Pieces of the "Apoſtolical Fathers there is not the leaſt "Claim or Pretenſion to any of theſe ex-"traordinary Gifts," to which I replied in the firſt Place, that "the Plain Reaſon "why the Apoſtolical Fathers did not en-"large on this Subject was, becauſe They "were not writing to *Heathens* who need-"ed *Converſion*, but to their *own Diſciples* "who needed *Inſtruction* or *Admonition*, ſo "that if there be in their Epiſtles any *inci-*"*dental* Mention of ſuch ſupernatural En-"dowments, it is as much as can reaſona-"bly be expected, and more than could "neceſſarily be demanded." Mr. *T.* with-

our the leaſt Attempt of ſhewing that this Diſtinction was frivolous, and that the Mention of Miraculous Evidence was as proper and neceſſary to be repeatedly made to thoſe who believed it already, as to thoſe who oppoſed it; runs off to Generals, and obſerves (P. 14, &c.) that it is hard to conceive, that if Miracles continued, all the Writers for ſo long a Space of Time could avoid taking ſome particular Notice of them; that in the Acts of the Apoſtles they are circumſtantially ſpecified;---that it is to be preſumed, that if God Almighty thought fit to continue a Power of working Miracles in his Church, that he would take Care to have ſome Teſtimony of the Exerciſe of this Power authentically recorded---that it is highly probable that He muſt intend ſuch mighty Works as an Object of Belief to Thoſe that come after; and that this implies ſomething of an infallible Direction to the Perſons who are to record them.--- "But this," ſays He, "is by no Body contended for in the "preſent Caſe." I think ſo too, and therefore do not ſee the Force or Uſe of this Method of Reaſoning. Mr. *T.* adds, that "He "does not (and I am glad that He does not) "lay down this Method of Reaſoning as "an abſolute and demonſtrative Proof, that "there were no ſuch Powers exiſting; but

 "this

" this He will venture positively to infer " from it, that 'tis of no Manner of Conse- " quence to Us whether there were or no." The Difference between making this Belief a *necessary Article* of Faith, and representing it as of no *Manner of Consequence* at all, is a Point that has been spoken to already, and need not be repeated as often as these Insinuations occur.

Mr. *T.* then proceeds triumphantly, repeating my Words, " Is then an incidental " mention of these Powers as much as can " be expected, and more than can be de- " manded?" He goes on, " According to " this latter Assertion, We had had Reason " to believe them, if no Mention at all had " been made of them. This is carrying the " Matter a great Way indeed, *&c.*" What perplexed the Thoughts of this Gentleman, or what strange Connection He had formed in his own Mind, when He wrote these Sentences, I cannot pretend to say, or even to guess: But how he could infer from my saying, that in Practical Exhortations addressed to professed Believers to awaken them to a suitable Life, it was as much as could reasonably be expected, and more than could necessarily be demanded, that there should be an *incidental* Mention of Miracles, that therefore We should have had Reason to believe them,

them, if no Mention at all had been made of them, I cannot in the leaſt conjecture. The Grounds, on which We believe theſe Miracles, is the Teſtimony of Thoſe who had Occaſion to take Notice of the *Evidences* of Chriſtianity, but this was not the Point in View when They wrote to Diſciples who already admitted all that could be ſaid on that Head, and needed *Admonitions* only to ſtir them up to a Holy Practice. With them, not the *Evidence*, but the *Nature* and *Importance* of their Religion, were the proper Subjects of Diſcourſe, and are accordingly chiefly treated of by the Apoſtolical Writers. Had Thoſe who firſt wrote profeſſedly to eſtabliſh the *Truth* of this Religion, been *Silent* on this Article, This would have been a conſiderable Prejudice againſt the Teſtimony of later Writers, with Reſpect to Miracles; but it is no ſuch Exception that *Thoſe* did not more expreſſly mention them, whoſe Subject did not lead them to this Point, and who had no Occaſion to be continually telling Believers what They all knew already, and who were more likely to fail in *Practice* than in *Faith*. In the earlieſt Apologies that are ſtill extant, there is an expreſs Claim to miraculous Powers, and We have ſome Teſtimony concerning the Teſtimony in this Reſpect, of thoſe which are loſt, which

which is all that can be expected in this Caſe. *Euſebius*, who had read them, aſſures Us on their Authority, that the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles did work Miracles. ἐπεὶ καὶ τῆς θείας πνεύματος εἰσέτι τότε δι' αὐτῶν πλεῖσται παράδοξοι δυνάμεις ἐνήργουν· ὥς τε ἀπὸ πρώτης ἀκροάσεως, ἀθρόως ἀυτανδρα πλήθη προθύμως τὴν εἰς τὸν τῶν ὅλων δημιουργὸν εὐσέβειαν αὐταῖς ψυχαῖς καταδέχεσθαι. Euſeb. Eccleſ. Hiſt. Lib. 3. c. 37. Since therefore They who wrote on Purpoſe to convert Gainſayers, and to diſarm Perſecutors, did challenge this Power, when it muſt have been fatal to them to have made a falſe Claim, What can be inferred from the *ſuppoſed Silence* of thoſe, who were writing *practical* Advices and Admonitions to *Believers*, to perſuade them to *live as becometh the Goſpel of Chriſt*? All that I can infer from it is, that the primitive Writers knew and conſidered well what they were about, addreſſed themſelves very properly to the different Perſons whom They had Occaſion to apply to, and mentioned theſe *miraculous Gifts* there, and there only, where they were of Uſe for the Conviction of Thoſe who might be ſuppoſed to doubt of them.

Let it be conſidered a little, how this Caſe would have ſtood, and in what Manner the Objections would have been formed, if theſe

first *Epiſtolary Writers* had mentioned the Power of working Miracles amongſt their own Diſciples, and the enſuing Apologiſts had taken no Notice of them in their Conteſts with Unbelievers and Gainſayers. Would not their Claim have been parallelled, (and with great Appearance of Reaſon) with that of the preſent *Romiſh Church*, which talks loudly of Miracles amongſt her own People, but does not vouchſafe to offer them to the Examination, and for the Converſion of reputed Hereticks? Whereas the Primitive Writers on the contrary addreſſed themſelves very properly to all Men according to their own Principles, propoſing directly the beſt Means of Conviction in the Examination of *Miraculous Powers* to their *Enemies*, who needed ſuch Conviction, but paſſing them over *in Silence*, or but *incidentally* mentioning them to their *Friends*, who they knew agreed with them in this Point. And can it be thought an *Argument*; can it be thought a *Preſumption* againſt the poſitive Teſtimony of the profeſſed Defenders of the Faith, that the Epiſtolary Writers in behalf of a ſuitable Holineſs of Converſation, did not leave their Subject, and go out of their Way, to repeat the Evidence over and over again, by which theſe Converts were at firſt brought over to the Acknowledgment of the Faith?

It

It has been very pertinently obſerved by the Gentlemen who have wrote before on this Point, that there is no Mention of theſe miraculous Gifts in any of the Epiſtles except thoſe of St. *Paul*, and in ſeveral of his they are paſſed over in Silence; and whatever Cauſes may be aſſigned for this Omiſſion, will be equally applicable to the Writings of St. *Clement*, St. *Polycarp*, and the Others. It will plainly follow from hence, that no Preſumption lies againſt their Knowledge of the Continuance of miraculous Powers, merely from their not inſiſting upon them. I may add, that the Mention of them in thoſe Epiſtles, where they do occur, appears to have been owing chiefly to ſome Enquiries made by the Converts in Relation to them, or to ſome Caſes wherein They ſtood in need of Direction concerning the Uſe of them; whereas theſe Queſtions being anſwered, and theſe Caſes reſolved by an inſpired Apoſtle, there was leſs Room for future Difficulties, and of Courſe leſs Occaſion for reſuming the Mention of theſe miraculous Gifts. Some of the Epiſtles of the Apoſtolical Fathers appear from their *Contents* and *introductory* Expreſſions, to have been owing to *Enquiries* and *Applications for Advice* in Points of a very different Kind; Others to ſome particular Exigencies; All to

Subjects

Subjects of a very remote Nature from the Queſtion of *Miracles*.

A farther Remark may, I think, be offered on this Point, which to me appears to be of ſome Importance towards the Deciſion of it. Had theſe *Apoſtolical* Writers had any Occaſion to introduce the *Subject of Miracles*, had They referred to thoſe wrought *by the Apoſtles*, or *in their Times*, and taken no Notice of the *Continuance* of the ſame Powers among themſelves, this might well have been thought to be ſome Prejudice againſt their Knowledge of ſuch Continuance; but if They uniformly omitted *all Mention* of ſupernatural Interpoſition, and dwelt only on the *practical* Part of Chriſtianity, then their *Silence* can be of no more Force againſt their Belief of Miracles in their own Days, than of thoſe in the Days of the Apoſtles. Now it is very remarkable, that throughout the Epiſtles ſpoken of, this Part of the Evidence is totally paſſed over in Silence. There is no *Streſs* laid upon; there is ſcarce any *incidental* Reference to the extraordinary Gifts beſtowed on the *Apoſtles*, and their Fellow Labourers in the ſame Cauſe; and here again, whatever Reaſons may be given for their Silence concerning the *firſt Miracles*, will be juſt as ſtrong for their *continued Silence* with Regard to the

ſucceed-

ſucceeding ones. They often ſpeak of the *Apoſtles*, and refer to them as eminent Examples of Piety and Virtue; They ſpeak of the Holineſs of their Lives, and of the Purity of their Precepts, which were the proper Points of Conſideration to Thoſe who admitted their Authority, and needed not to be reminded of their miraculous Gifts to ſupport that Authority.

By this Time perhaps the Impartial Reader may find it not "ſo hard to conceive," why for the Space of fifty Years, as Dr. *M.* and Mr. *T.* repreſent it, there may poſſibly be no expreſs Teſtimony concerning miraculous Powers, tho' they continued to be frequently exerciſed in the Church. The Reaſon is, becauſe there are no Writers, now extant, whoſe Intent of Writing could lead them to mention ſuch a Subject. It cannot indeed be proved, that there was ſuch a *total Silence* for the Interval of half a Century, as Dr. *M.* aſſerts; for *Quadratus* and *Ariſtides* preſented their Apologies to the Emperor *Adrian* within about half that Time from the Death of St. *John* the Evangeliſt, and appear from Hiſtory to have met with good Succeſs in them. In ſuch *Apologies* We might reaſonably expect to find ſuch Claim mentioned, but their Apologies being loſt, we cannot bring direct Proofs from them,

them, but can only ſupply that Defect by the Account of Others concerning them, and to this Purpoſe that expreſs Teſtimony of *Euſebius* forecited, who had Himſelf read them, appears to be very pertinent and conſiderable.

But ſays Mr. *T.* "Look back to the "Acts of the Apoſtles, and We find the "Perſons, Time, Place and Occaſion cir-"cumſtantially denoted, but here in the "Times We are treating of, when the Re-"ligion became every Day more dilated, "Nothing of this Nature ever once happen-"ed that was thought worthy to be re-"lated, a Suppoſition that in my Appre-"henſion exceeds the Grounds of Credibi-"lity." (P. 14, 15.) Can this Gentleman in earneſt think, that the Occaſion and Intent of the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, written to give an Account of the Propagation of Chriſtianity, and of the Means that contributed to it, ſerving equally to the *Converſion of Enemies*, and the *Confirmation of Friends*, is to be parallel'd with that of *private Epiſtles*, directed *only* to Believers, to caution them againſt Diviſions among themſelves in Point of Church Communion, or to ſtir them up to a Holineſs of Life ſuitable to their Holy Profeſſion? Is it any Reflection on thoſe Writers, that becauſe St. *Luke* wrote to the

Purpoſe,

Purpoſe, and mentioned the Miracles which ſo much aſſiſted the Labours of the Apoſtles in the Propagation of the Goſpel, they did not go out of their Way to do the ſame, when They were writing with another View, or upon a different Deſign? As ſoon as *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtories* were written, Miracles were taken notice of in *them* likewiſe, which could not well be expected in *Advices* and Directions concerning a *Holy Life*. The Difference with Reſpect to the more *circumſtantial* Account of the Miracles recorded in the Inſpired Writings, is readily allowed, and is a diſtinguiſhing Advantage on their Side; yet, perhaps, for that very Reaſon ſuch *circumſtantial* Relations were the leſs neceſſary afterwards, when the general Claim in the like Inſtances was known to be continued and maintained. It does not therefore by any Means follow, that nothing happened worth relating, becauſe We are not favoured with more particular Relations of the ſeveral Inſtances. The known Declarations and Challenges of the Continuance of miraculous Power in the ſame Caſes, that had before been recorded, might well be thought ſufficient.

After all, It is by no Means admitted, that there is ſo total a Silence in the Apoſtolical Writers as is pretended; altho', if

there

there had, it might reaſonably be accounted for from the foregoing Conſiderations. But Dr. *M.* allows, that They ſpeak of *ſpiritual Gifts*, as abounding among the Chriſtians of that Age, adding, without aſſigning any Reaſon for it, that theſe cannot reaſonably be interpreted to mean any Thing more than the *ordinary Gifts* and Graces of the Goſpel. Such an unſupported Aſſertion I called begging the Queſtion; but Mr. *T.* obſerves, in Supply of what the Doctor is thought to have omitted, that "if the Words will bear "this Interpretation, without Force or Diſ-"tortion, the Reaſon of the Thing will de-"termine their Meaning to ordinary Gifts "rather than miraculous ones." (P. 17.) The Reaſon for this is, that "it is not prov-"ed, or even made probable by other Ar-"guments, that there were any ſuch Things "as miraculous Gifts then exiſting, and that "the Probabilities, according to the Reaſon-"ing juſt now laid down, ſeem to lie pretty "ſtrongly againſt it." I ſhall be very willing to reſt the Queſtion upon this Point, whether there are not other clear Arguments to prove the Continuance of miraculous Powers at that Time; and whether Mr. *T.*'s Probabilities againſt it will bear Examination. I have offered ſomething on both theſe Points already, and foreſee an Occaſion of reſuming

ing the Conſideration of them, for which Reaſon I ſhall not farther enlarge on them in this Place.

Dr. *M.* next attempts, and Mr. *T.* ſeconds Him in the Attempt, to ſhew that thoſe Teſtimonies from theſe firſt Writers, which Archbiſhop *Wake* and *my Father* had laid ſome Streſs on, as referring to the Continuance of miraculous Powers amongſt them, are nothing to the Purpoſe. Dr. *M.* obſerves againſt the Archbiſhop, that "He attempts to confirm his Opinion, not by "any Facts, or expreſs Teſtimonies drawn "from Themſelves, but by Inferences only, "or Conjectures." Which, ſaid I, "for "the Reaſon before given," (that is, becauſe theſe Writers penned their Epiſtles on another Occaſion, and with another View than to repreſent the *Evidence* of Chriſtianity) was all the Evidence that the Nature of the Argument could reaſonably admit. If whilſt *Hiſtorians* and *Apologiſts*, whoſe proper Buſineſs it was, did All *unanimouſly* make expreſs mention of Miracles, the *practical* Writers had likewiſe ſome *References* to the ſame in their Epiſtles, and "if it can "be ſhewn by *Inferences*, that They did thus "refer to them, this I thought might be "ſatisfactory to every impartial Enquirer." Mr. *T.* without the leaſt Notice again of

this

this Diſtinction declares Himſelf diſſatisfied, repreſents it, as if I had placed the whole Merits of the Cauſe upon *References* and *Inferences*, as the only Evidence to be expected; and inſiſts upon better Authority before He yields his Aſſent. Whereas I was apparently ſpeaking, as the Subject led me, only of the *Epiſtolary* Writers of the Apoſtolical Age, who piouſly endeavoured to compoſe ſome riſing Differences, and to exhort all the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, without Diſtinction, to agree in making true *Virtue* and *Holineſs* the ſincere Aim of all their Purſuits; and in *ſuch Writers* I thought ſome *References* to the Continuance of *miraculous Powers* were all that could reaſonably be expected, and might prove ſatisfactory to every impartial Enquirer. Mr. *T.* profeſſes that his Sentiments are directly oppoſite; that is, He expects ſome *Hiſtorical* Accounts of the ſupernatural Means by which the Goſpel was publiſhed, or ſome *Apologetical* Vindication of the Truth of Chriſtianity from the Miracles wrought in Support of it, in Writings penned on a very different Occaſion, and addreſſed to Thoſe who knew and believed, and profeſſed to believe all this already. This is the Sentiment directly oppoſite to mine, and I ſhall freely leave it to Others to patronize. Dr. *M.* Himſelf had obſerved, that

" the

" the whole Purport of the Writings of
" these Apostolical Fathers was to illustrate
" the Excellence and Purity of the Christian
" Doctrine." (P. 3.) Which Observation was a sufficient Answer to All that He could infer from their *Silence* upon another Subject. They wrote, according to his own Account of them, to illustrate the *internal* Evidence of our Religion, and therefore it can be no Disadvantage to the *external* Evidence that They did not enlarge upon *that*.

Dr. *M.* gives a brief Account of the previous Arguments used by Archbishop *Wake*, to induce Us to believe the Continuance of Miraculous Powers amongst the Writers of those Epistles now under View, antecedently to their supposed Testimonies in Relation to it; but the Dr. vouchsafes not a Word of Reply to them, and Mr. *T.* adds that " in
" Truth it amounts to so very little, that it
" is quite needless to say any Thing to set
" the Force of it aside." (P. 19.) This again is a very short Method of answering and *defending*, but I shall not follow the Pattern, but shall take Leave to make a Remark on the only Point, which in this Argument Mr. *T.* thought fit to take Notice of. He says " what *Justin Martyr* urges against
" *Trypho* the *Jew*, is entirely out of the pre-
" sent Question, as not coming within the

" Compaſs of Time, the Teſtimonies of " which We are now diſcuſſing." This is in direct Contradiction to a Conceſſion, which He had made but two Pages before, that " if it was proved, or even made probable " by other Arguments, that there were any " ſuch Things as miraculous Gifts exiſting, " then He would be ready to admit, that " Expreſſions of a doubtful Signification " might very fitly be applied in Confirmation " of thoſe Arguments." (P. 17.) It was therefore very much to the Purpoſe, for the Archbiſhop to introduce the expreſs Teſtimony of the firſt Controverſial Writer in Defence of the Truth of Chriſtianity, and one ſo very near to the Time of theſe Apoſtolical Fathers, in Favour of the Continuance of miraculous Powers, to confirm the leſs explicit Phraſes of theſe *Epiſtolary* Writers, which are thought to mean the ſame. As it appears by the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, and by ſome of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, that theſe extraordinary Gifts were in Being juſt *before* theſe Epiſtles were penned, and by the Teſtimony of *Juſtin Martyr*, and the ſubſequent Writers, that they continued in the Times *immediately following*, theſe are ſtrong Proofs, that Expreſſions, otherwiſe doubtful, of Thoſe who wrote in this ſhort Interval, are to be interpreted to the ſame Senſe, and are very pertinently

tinently alledged as of Weight in this Connection. This Conſideration is, I think, of Force in itſelf, and is ſo particularly according to Mr. *T*'s own State of the Caſe; and therefore the mention of *Juſtin Martyr*'s Teſtimony, was by no Means out of the preſent Queſtion, becauſe not within the Compaſs of Time, the Teſtimonies of which were under Conſideration: Tho' if the Half-Century ſpoken of, be taken from the Death of the laſt Apoſtle, this Writer's Teſtimony would juſt be included.

After all, What the Archbiſhop offered on this Head, as *previous* to the Teſtimonies which He propoſed to produce from theſe Writers themſelves, is by no Means ſo inconſiderable, as to be paſſed over in ſuch contemptuous Silence. I had, after enumerating his Arguments, obſerved, that " with theſe " Preſumptions in Favour of theſe Apoſtolical " Writers, He proceeds to thoſe Teſtimonies, " wherein They *do refer* to theſe miracu- " lous Gifts," which gave Occaſion to Mr. *T*. to ſay, as if I had been ſenſible that this was but of little Weight, that " all that this " learned Writer has thus far offered, Mr. " *D*. Himſelf allows to be only *Preſumpti-* " *ons*." (P. 19.) I am not fond, whatever Others may be, of calling every Thing *Demonſtration*, which appears convincing to me,

eſpecially when it depends on *Inferences*, and the Union of ſeveral *collateral* Circumſtances; nor would it have added to the Strength of theſe *Indications* of the Continuance of miraculous Gifts, as the Archbiſhop Himſelf calls them, if I had pronounced them to be concluſive and unanſwerable. But *preſumptive* Arguments have their Weight and Uſe, eſpecially when laid in the Ballance againſt *Nothing*, or with other *Preſumptions* amounting to *Nothing*, ſuch as I apprehend thoſe of Dr. *M.* and Mr. *T*'s on this Point to be. They preſume, that if miraculous Powers were continued in the Church for the *Converſion* of *Unbelievers*, Thoſe, who wrote on another Subject for the *Edification* of the *Faithful*, would not have failed to take Notice of it; and that not *incidentally* only, but by full and expreſs Teſtimonies, as if They had been writing for the *Conviction* of *Infidels*. Let Us now review the *previous*, or, if You pleaſe, *preſumptive* Arguments offered by the Archbiſhop on this Side of the Queſtion.

He obſerved in the Firſt Place, that Qualifications of this Sort were conſidered in the Choice of the *inferior* Officers of the Church, and therefore much more, 'tis likely, in the Deſignation of *Superiors* to their Office; He confirmed the Aſſertion from *Acts* vi. 3, where in the Choice of *Deacons*, the People

were

were directed to *look out Men full of the Holy Ghoſt, and of Wiſdom*, and that the *extraordinary* Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit was hereby meant, appears from the 8th and 10th Verſes of the ſame Chapter; where it is ſaid, that Stephen *full of Faith and Power did great Wonders and Miracles among the People. —And They were not able to reſiſt the Wiſdom, and the Spirit by which He ſpake.* "Now," ſays the Archbiſhop, "If ſuch were the Care "which they took in the Choice of thoſe, "who were to be admitted into the loweſt "Miniſtry of the Church; We cannot doubt, "but that They were certainly much more "careful not to admit Any into the higheſt "Rank of Honour and Authority in it, "but what were in a yet more eminent "Manner endued with the ſame Gifts." (P. 167, 168.) And is there no Weight in this Conſideration? According to the beſt Judgment that We can form of the proper *Occaſion* and *Intent* of *Miraculous Powers*, they muſt be of moſt Uſe in the Hands of Thoſe, who were called to the moſt ſevere and moſt frequent Tryals in Defence of their Religion; and theſe were of Courſe the higheſt Officers and Governors of the Church. What One of the Apoſtles ſaid of Themſelves, 1 *Cor.* iv. 9, is as applicable to their immediate Succeſſors, the firſt Biſhops and

Paſtors of the Church, that *God had ſet forth them laſt*, that is, as the principal Sufferers to crown the Triumph and compleat the Shew, for they *were made a Spectacle to the World, and to Angels, and to Men.* Theſe were the principal Perſons ſought after on all Occaſions, as the Objects of the Enemies Malice, and the chief Glory and Pattern of Believers, and in both Reſpects had the beſt Opportunity of exerting theſe miraculous Gifts, to the Confuſion of Gainſayers, and Confirmation of Believers. If therefore even *Deacons* were to be thus qualified, becauſe their Office, as Diſtributers of the Churches Treaſury, would bring them more into Notice, and render them conſpicuous, it may well be inferred, that Thoſe in ſtill higher Stations, who were to be ſelected as the chief Champions of the Chriſtian Cauſe, ſhould be diſtinguiſhed by the ſame Powers, which They would ſo often be called on to exert.

But the Archbiſhop does not reſt here. He proceeds to bring poſitive Evidence both from *Clemens Rom.* and *Clemens Alex.* that the Apoſtles were guided by the Holy Spirit in the Choice of the chief Rulers and Biſhops of the Church; and the moſt obvious Senſe of their Teſtimony amounts to a Declaration, not merely that they were choſen by Thoſe, who had the *Gift of diſcerning Spirits*,

Spirits, but that they were therefore choſen, as fit Perſons for this Office, becauſe already diſtinguiſhed by the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit. It is then added, that " the very " Impoſition of Hands did in thoſe Days con- " fer the Holy Spirit in an extraordinary " Manner upon thoſe, who were ordained " to the Miniſtry of the Goſpel:" And a very pertinent Paſſage of Holy Scripture is brought to prove it. And is this likewiſe thought undeſerving of all Notice and Anſwer? The Sacred Writings do ſo often join the *laying on of Hands*, and the immediate Effect in the Endowment of the Perſons, ſo ſet apart for the Miniſtry, with *extraordinary Gifts*, that the inſpired Hiſtory may reaſonably be admitted as the beſt Comment on the *Text* referred to: And that Text thus interpreted will ſtand as a *preſumptive* Evidence, that Thoſe, who were ſet apart to the ſame Office in the ſame Manner, (the ſame Occaſion for extraordinary Aſſiſtance ſtill continuing) were favoured with the ſame miraculous Powers.

The Archbiſhop adds, (P. 170.) that " if " We look to thoſe Accounts, which ſtill " remain to Us of them, they will plainly " ſhew Us, that they were endued, and " that in a very ſingular Manner, with " this Power and Gift of the Bleſſed Spi- " rit." He obſerves that Three of them

are by Name ſpoken of in the New Teſtament as Perſons of great Endowments; St. *Barnabas* is ſaid to be *a good Man, full of the Holy Ghoſt and of Faith*, Acts xi. 24. *Hermas* is mentioned by St. *Paul* among the firſt and principal Converts to Chriſtianity. *Rom.* xvi. 14, and *Clement* is honoured with this Teſtimony from the ſame Apoſtle, that He was *his Fellow-Labourer*, and that *his Name was in the Book of Life*, Phil. iv. 3. If the Manner of mentioning the two latter be thought of little Weight, as containing Nothing more than might have been ſaid of them, tho' they had not been diſtinguiſhed by *ſupernatural Gifts*, it is to be obſerved, that the Streſs is not laid on the bare Mention of them, but on the Mention of them as ſuch *chief Perſons*, at a Time when Miraculous Powers confeſſedly did abound. St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Romans*, wherein mention is made of *Hermas*, is One of thoſe Epiſtles wherein theſe χαρίσματα, or Spiritual Gifts, are ſpoken of; and St. *Clement* was Biſhop of *Rome* near the ſame Time; and is it then a contemptible Preſumption, that theſe Perſons ſo diſtinguiſhed by St. *Paul*, were favoured with thoſe *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, which appear to have been not infrequent amongſt inferior Perſons at that Time? Nay, according to Dr. *M*'s own

Opinion,

Opinion, that Miracles ceaſed with the Age of the Apoſtles, theſe diſtinguiſhed Writers and Rulers in the Chriſtian Church may reaſonably be preſumed to be endued with them. For *Clement* was martyred juſt before St. *John* died, and tho' the Time and Manner of *Hermas*'s Death be uncertain, yet from the Time of his Writing his *Paſtor*, which ſeveral learned Men have from the Contents of it, judged to be about thirty Years before, it may well be ſuppoſed that He did not outlive the Apoſtolical Age. The ſame Method of Reaſoning will hold in Part, tho' not in the Whole, in Favour of *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*. The former was made Biſhop of *Antioch*, the latter of *Smyrna*, many Years before the Deceaſe of St. *John*, in an Age therefore, when Miracles are allowed to have ſubſiſted; and when, if Any were favoured with them, their chief Biſhops and Rulers can ſcarce be ſuppoſed to have been deſtitute of them. And if They were favoured with them in the former Part of their Lives, Can it be ſuppoſed that there was a ſudden Extinction of all ſuch Gifts immediately upon the Death of the laſt Apoſtle? Would it not have been of Prejudice to the Chriſtian Cauſe, if the ſame Perſons, who had hitherto claimed the Power of working Miracles in its Defence, ſhould all at once (the ſame Perſecutions ſtill raging againſt it)

it) be forced to own themſelves deprived of any ſuch Privilege? Would not this have been a Reflection on their former Pretenſions, and have occaſioned ſome Suſpicions, that the Miracles heretofore ſaid to have been wrought by them, were received rather thro' Want of Examination, than real Evidence, ſince the ſame Perſons, on the ſame Occaſion, were not able to repeat them? This is the Subſtance of the *preſumptive* Arguments offered by Archbiſhop *Wake*, which are more eaſily neglected than anſwered. We are next to conſider the Senſe of thoſe Paſſages in which He ſuppoſes a *Reference* to be made to miraculous Powers.

The Firſt and Principal is that of St. *Clement* to the *Corinthians*, wherein he cautions them againſt Pride and Vanity, on Account of any *extraordinary* Endowments that they might be poſſeſſed of, ſuch as the Faith of Miracles, Myſtical Knowlege, or the Diſcernment of Speeches; for to theſe Endowments, ſays the Archbiſhop, the Expreſſions manifeſtly relate. Mr. *T.* replies, (P. 20.) that a Man may have Faith without the Power of working Miracles, that there is no additional Word in the Original to confine the Knowledge ſpoken of to *myſtical Knowlege*, and that whatever the Meaning of theſe Endowments was, it was ſuch as they could attain by the Uſe of their

their own Faculties, becauſe, as He ſays, They are here exhorted to attain them.---I would obſerve in the firſt Place, in Anſwer to this, that if the Original Words had *confined* the Gifts ſpoken of to the *Faith of Miracles*, to *myſtical Knowledge*, and the like, then This would have been produced as an *expreſs* and *deciſive* Teſtimony, whereas it was introduced only as a Paſſage, which had *Reference* to this Point; and if from other Arguments it can be ſhewn, that it did refer to ſuch *ſupernatural* Endowments, this will be ſufficient to the Purpoſe for which it was alledged; and it is no Kind of Anſwer to inſiſt merely, that it is *capable* of another Senſe, or that the Original does *not confine* it to our Senſe, when the contrary was never pretended. Why the Archbiſhop did not explain at large the Grounds on which He thought theſe Expreſſions *manifeſtly related* to *ſupernatural* Gifts, may well be ſuppoſed to be, that He thought it not neceſſary for Thoſe, who read with *Attention* the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, and of theſe their moſt immediate Succeſſors, and obſerved the *Sameneſs* of the *Argument*, of the *Style*, and even of the *Perſons*, to whom theſe Exhortations were addreſſed. St. *Clement* wrote to the ſame Diſciples, at the ſame Place, and on the ſame Subject, that St. *Paul* had done not many Years, not more than twelve Years before. That

Apoſtle's

Apoſtle's Epiſtle to the *Corinthians* is, That, wherein He diſcourſes more largely than in any other, of theſe *ſupernatural Gifts*, and as St. *Clement*'s Epiſtle to the ſame People was written whilſt ſome of the Apoſtles were ſtill living, and therefore, according to Dr. *M*'s own Scheme, whilſt miraculous Powers did ſtill ſubſiſt, if his Expreſſions are *capable* of the ſame Meaning, they are moſt reaſonably to be interpreted by it. The *Occaſion* on which their ſeveral Epiſtles were written, were much the ſame, and the Exhortations to Peace, Charity, and Humility are remarkably ſimilar. St. *Paul* enumerates the ſeveral miraculous Endowments, urges them as Motives to *practical* Improvement, and repreſents them as of no Uſe or Value to the Perſon endowed with them without it. *Tho' I have the Gift of Prophecy*, ſays He, *and underſtand all Myſteries, and all Knowledge, and tho' I have all Faith, ſo that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing.* 1 Cor. xiii. 2. St. *Clement*, on Occaſion of the like Differences and Diviſions in the Church, urges the like humble and condeſcending Spirit of *Charity*, as neceſſary to make all Sorts of Gifts uſeful, and enumerating in the ſame Manner the Endowments, which might be moſt likely to make Men look on Themſelves as important and conſiderable, and which yet ought

to

to make Them the more Humble and Beneficent, expreſſes Himſelf thus, "Let a "Man be Faithful, let Him be Powerful in "the Utterance of Knowledge, Let Him be "Wiſe in making an exact Judgment of "Words, Let him be pure in all his Acti-"ons. But ſtill by how much the more he "ſeems to be above Others, by Reaſon of "theſe Things, by ſo much the more will it "behove him to be Humble-minded; and "to ſeek what is profitable to All Men, and "not his own Advantage." Now Whoever obſerves how exactly *parallel* theſe Expreſſions are to thoſe of the Apoſtle, how nearly the ſame Time they were written, how critically on the ſame Occaſion, and to the ſame Diſciples, how punctually the ſame Number and Kind of Endowments are alluded to, can ſcarce heſitate to interpret the One by the Other; and tho' Mr. *T.* adds, that "Whoever can find in theſe Words any "plain Alluſion to Miraculous Powers as "then ſubſiſting, will do much more than "He pretends to," yet I think there is no great Preſumption in ſuch Pretenſions, and that the Compariſon of theſe Paſſages, with all the Circumſtances forementioned, may well be thought ſufficient to aſcertain the Senſe of that which is now before Us; and to ſhew that the Archbiſhop had ſome Reaſon

ſon on his Side, when He aſſerted, that to this Senſe of miraculous Endowments, the Expreſſion manifeſtly related. Mr. *T.* intimates that That Clauſe, "Let Him be Pure "in all his Actions," may ſhew that He was ſpeaking of natural Endowments; but it is obſervable that St. *Paul*, in the forecited parallel Paſſage, does likewiſe join *moral* Virtues to *ſupernatural* Gifts, and goes on to add, that tho' He ſhould diſpenſe all that He had in the Relief of the Neceſſities of Others, and ſhould even ſubmit to Martyrdom Himſelf, yet it would avail Nothing without the real Temper of Charity and Humility. This latter Verſe certainly does not prove, that the *Apoſtle* was not ſpeaking of miraculous Powers in the former, and therefore neither is the ſame Method of ſpeaking by St. *Clement*, any Diſproof of his alluding to the ſame in the firſt Part of the Sentence: But the plain Meaning of Both was, that even the Union of extraordinary Gifts, and ordinary Graces, ſhould but diſpoſe them to the deeper *Humility*, in Conſideration of the *Author* of all their Endowments.

But Mr. *T.* lays great Streſs on this Sentence's being an *Exhortation*, that theſe Endowments were to be acquired by a Man's own Endeavours, and were therefore no ſupernatural Gifts. Were the Sentence certain-

ly

ly to be underſtood as he interprets it, his Inference would not follow. Does not St. *Paul* ſpeaking in the cleareſt Manner of Miraculous Gifts, direct theſe very *Corinthian* Diſciples to be fervent in the Purſuit of them? *Covet earneſtly the beſt Gifts*, 1 Cor. xii. 31. The Original is more full and determinate, to this Purpoſe, Ζηλῶτε δὲ τὰ χαρίσματα τὰ κρείττονα; and again, *Covet earneſtly ſpiritual Gifts, but rather that Ye may propheſy*, 1 Cor. xiv. 1. Ζηλῶτε δὲ τὰ πνευματικά; μᾶλλον δὲ ἵνα προφητεύητε· The Means, by which their own Endeavours could contribute to the Attainment of theſe extraordinary Gifts, were probably *Zeal* for the Importance of Chriſtianity, *Diligence* in the Propagation of it, and *Conſtant Prayer* to God that They might be Uſeful in his Service. Theſe were the proper *Preparatives* for the extraordinary Illapſes of the Divine Spirit upon the Faithful, and an Exhortation to cultivate and improve thoſe Qualifications, was no Diſproof, that the Fruits of the Spirit to be attained by them, were not *ſupernatural*. St. *Clement* might therefore in like Manner have repeated St. *Paul*'s Advice, and have directed theſe *Corinthian* Diſciples to *covet earneſtly* thoſe extraordinary ſpiritual Gifts, without the leaſt Degree of Abſurdity.

But

But the Sentence itſelf bears very plainly a different Senſe; The former Part of it is not an *Exhortation*, but a *Suppoſition*. "Let Any "One," ſays this Father, "be endued with "Faith, Knowledge, the Diſcernment of "Speeches, &c." that is, Be He never ſo eminent in all theſe Gifts, "by how much "the more He ſeems to excel Others, by ſo "much the more will it behove Him to be "Humble-minded."—The whole is but one compleat Sentence, the Beginning of it is plainly *Hypothetical*, and the Ground of the Caution given in the Concluſion. There is no connecting Particle to join the Sentences, or to make Senſe of them; as there muſt have been, if the former had really been an *Exhortation* to attain thoſe Qualifications. Whatever therefore Mr. *T.* argues concerning theſe Gifts being natural, as being recommended to Mens Purſuit, is founded on a *Miſtake*, and needs no other Anſwer. St. *Clement*'s Advice was not a Direction to poſſeſs themſelves of theſe Endowments, but to be *Humble tho'* They were poſſeſſed of them.

Mr. *T.* adds that "the Caution that follows "is every whit as applicable upon his Interpre-"tation; for that Humility and a right Ap-"plication of Talents to the Good of Others "are Virtues as needful to be recommended

"to

" to Men of great Learning and improved " Abilities as to a Perſon divinely inſpired." (P. 21, 22.) Such Cautions indeed are never improper or unſeaſonable; but ſince the *Occaſions* of them are here brought into Competition, I cannot think that they were quite ſo needful, on Suppoſition that the *Corinthians* had juſt loſt thoſe ſupernatural Gifts, which a very little before abounded amongſt them, and were now reduced to the common State of all other Men; as if they ſtill flouriſhed in thoſe diſtinguiſhing Privileges of *Miracles*, *Prophecies*, and other *ſupernatural* Endowments. Such high Privileges were more likely to puff up *all* Minds, which were not on a conſtant Guard; St. *Paul* had juſt before found it neceſſary to give ſeveral Cautions on this Head; St. *Clement* repeats the ſame Caution without any Intimation of any ſuch material Alteration that had happened in their Circumſtances; and can this Caution then be thought every Whit as applicable to the One Caſe as to the Other? If the *Corinthians* had thus been deſerted at once by the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Spirit, whilſt their Situation ſeemed to require them as much as before, they would probably have been *dejected* on ſuch a Deſertion, and would have been more likely to have needed ſome *Conſolations* for their Support, than *Admoni-*

tions againſt Vain-Glory, in ſuch Circumſtances as could yield little Temptation to it. The *Repetition* of this Caution, and eſpecially in the *Manner* in which it is *repeated*, is a Preſumptive Proof, that they were under the ſame Danger in this Reſpect, that they were when St. *Paul* wrote to them to the ſame Purpoſe. This is a ſtrong *Inference*, tho' it is no more; and much ſtronger than that, which preſumes the Gifts ſpoken of to be *common* ones, becauſe the *Corinthians* were required, as Mr. *T.* ſays, to improve Themſelves in a natural Way; whereas no ſuch Direction appears at all in this Place; and if it had appeared, might have been intended as a *Preparation* for the beſt and higheſt Endowments.

Mr. *T.* adds, (P. 22.) as if by Way of Reflection on the Poſition, that " Mr. *D.* al-" lows that the Queſtion is to be determined " by Inferences." What Queſtion does Mr. *D.* allow is to be thus determined? Not the Queſtion, whether miraculous Powers were continued in the Church after the Death of the Apoſtles; He inſiſts, that there is *expreſs* and *poſitive Evidence* for that; but the Queſtion, whether in particular theſe Apoſtolical Writers have in their Epiſtles taken any Notice of them: If This can be made out by *Inference*, it will be a ſufficient An-

ſwer

ſwer to Dr. *M*'s Objection from their *ſuppoſed Silence*; and the more critically the Circumſtances of the whole Caſe are examined, the more *ſatisfactory*, I am perſwaded, the *Inference* will appear.

A Paſſage very full to the Purpoſe, which had been introduced by *my Father*, comes next under Conſideration. It occurs in the Beginning of St. *Ignatius*'s Epiſtle to the *Smyrneans*, which is thus addreſſed, Ἠλεημένῃ ἐν παντὶ χαρίσματι, πεπληροφορημένῃ ἐν πίστει καὶ ἀγάπῃ, ἀνυστερήτῳ οὔσῃ παντὸς χαρίσματος. Dr. *M*'s intimated Anſwer, and Mr. *T*'s expreſs Defence of it is, that an Inſtance has been aſſigned, where "the Word χαρίσματα is uſed by one of the Primitive "Writers in a Place, where it can be underſtood in no other Senſe than that of "*ordinary* Gifts;" and that if this Word be ever ſo uſed, "then there ſeems no Neceſſity why We ſhould apply it otherwiſe in this Addreſs of St. *Ignatius*." (P. 23, 24.) I take the Liberty to differ from theſe Gentlemen in both Particulars. If the Word χαρίσματα had ever been uſed to ſignify only *common Gifts*, yet the Nature of the Phraſe, the Purport of the Sentence, and the Compariſon of it with parallel Paſſages of the Scriptures then in their Hands, muſt almoſt neceſſarily lead to the Interpreta-

pretation of it in this Paſſage with Relation to *extraordinary* Endowments. If χαρίσματα ſignified indifferently either natural or ſupernatural Gifts, yet when St. *Ignatius* congratulates the Church of *Smyrna* upon *being mercifully bleſſed with every Gift*, and *being wanting in no Gift*, are not *both Sorts* moſt evidently implied? Would This Addreſs have been true, if they had lately been deprived of thoſe Gifts, which had abounded in the Church not long before? The very Form of the Sentence is full and ſignificant to the ſame Purpoſe. According to Dr. *M*'s Interpretation, St. *Ignatius* ſaid the ſame Thing three Times over without any Variation, whereas if He referred to *Miraculous Powers* in the Beginning, then the Sentence is regular, and free from any improper Repetition, amounting to this only, that They were bleſſed with *ſupernatural* Endowments, *applied* them to the true Purpoſes of Faith and Charity, and thus abounding both in *Gifts* and *Graces*, were deficient in no Sort of Endowment. Dr. *M*. who inſiſts, that "theſe Words, as explained by the Context, "manifeſtly ſignify nothing more than the "ordinary Gifts of the Goſpel, Faith and "Charity," had thus connected the latter Part, *being filled with Faith and Charity*, ſo as to be *wanting in no good Gift*; and upon my

my taking Notice of this, Mr. *T.* obſerves, that Archbiſhop *Wake* had done the ſame; and then obſerves, "that Mr. *D.* has ſome-"times a very ſlender Regard to that learned "Prelate's Authority." There would, I think, be a very conſiderable Difference betwixt the Inſertion of ſuch a Word in a *common Tranſlation* to render it eaſy and familiar to the Reader, and the Inſertion of it in a *Critical Examination* intended to aſcertain the preciſe Meaning of the Paſſage: But however, the Point is very little material, if it was not intended, as I apprehended it was, to connect the ſecond and third Parts of the Sentence more cloſely than the firſt, as if *Every Good Gift* was implied in Faith and Charity. Whereas the Kind of Triumph, wherewith *Ignatius* concludes this Part of the Salutation, in that They were *wanting in no Sort of Gift*, appears to have been the Reſult of both the forementioned Conſiderations, in that They were bleſſed with every *ſupernatural Power* and each *Chriſtian Grace*. The Language in which the ſame Thing had been expreſſed in the *inſpired Writings*, is a ſtrong Confirmation of this Senſe of it. The Writer and Readers of this Epiſtle knew what St. *Paul* had ſaid before on this Subject; and He had expreſſed Himſelf ſo much in the ſame Manner, that

his Stile and Phraſe could ſcarce poſſibly have been uſed or underſtood in a Senſe ſo very different. That Apoſtle, in his firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, wherein He moſt largely diſcourſes of theſe *ſupernatural* Gifts, and under the very Title of χαρίσματα, expreſſes his Thanks to God for the Richneſs of his Diſtributions towards thoſe Diſciples, *inſomuch that They came behind in no Gift.* ὥστε ὑμᾶς μὴ ὑστερεῖσθαι ἐν μηδενὶ χαρίσματι. 1 *Cor.* i. 7. Now what could the Members of the Church of *Smyrna* have thought of the *Biſhop of Antioch*, if He had uſed the *ſame Words* to them, and meant a very *different Thing*? Would not the Compariſon of this Sentence, with that of St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, have raiſed *Concern* rather than the *Joy* intended by the Congratulation, and have reminded them of their diſconſolate State in being deprived of thoſe *principal Gifts*, which abounded when the Apoſtle congratulated his Diſciples in the ſame Manner? Would They not have been ready to reply, that They were far from being *wanting in no Gift*, when They wanted thoſe *chief Gifts*, which diſtinguiſhed their immediate Predeceſſors? Nay the very *Term*, in which They were reminded that They were *not wanting in any Gift*, was itſelf *relative*, was uſed as ſuch in the inſpired Writings by

Way of *Compariſon* with the State of Others, and plainly meant, that They did not *come behind* or *fall ſhort* of Others in this Particular.

Theſe Reaſons might be aſſigned for underſtanding the Paſſage in Queſtion, of *ſupernatural* Gifts, even tho' the Term uſed had been *capable* of either Senſe. But that is the next Point in Queſtion. Mr. *T.* ſays, that Dr. *M.* has produced an Inſtance from St. *Clement*, wherein the Word χαρίσματα can be underſtood in no other Senſe, than to ſignify Gifts of an *ordinary Kind*. I had taken the Liberty to own myſelf to be of a different Opinion, and to ſay, that the Senſe in the Paſſage referred to is *full as rational and ſtrong*, if We interpret it ſtrictly of ſupernatural Endowments. Upon which Mr. *T.* without producing the Paſſage at large, or ſhewing that it was not capable of the Senſe in which I had interpreted it, nay even without any Attempt of confirming his own, cries out, (P. 23.) " This it is to be bleſſed with " ſuperior Penetration; for my Part I only " pretend to be a common Reader, &c." Reflections and Flights of this Kind have no Relation to the Argument, nor do in the leaſt contribute to ſtrengthen or to recommend it. I ſhall therefore paſs over this without farther Notice, and ſhall proceed

ceed to ſome Obſervations on the Paſſage before Us. I obſerve then in the firſt Place, that Mr. *T.* has carried his Aſſertion farther than Dr. *M.* nay farther than the Paſſage from St. *Clement*, according to his own Interpretation of it, would juſtify Him. "If, "ſays He, the Word χαρίσματα is ever "made Uſe of to ſignify *extraordinary Gifts*, "&c. And that it is applied in this Senſe "even by theſe Writers Themſelves, Dr. "*M.* has ſhewn by producing an Inſtance "from St. *Clement*, where it can be under-"ſtood in no other." But it happens, that the Inſtance produced by Dr. *M.* mentions only the Word χαρίσμα in the *ſingular* Number, and tho' this may be of a leſs determinate Meaning, and an Inſtance may poſſibly be aſſigned in the ſacred Writings, where it ſignifies no more than a Gift in general, yet in the *Plural* Number it is more reſtrained in its Signification, and is uſed invariably for *ſupernatural* Gifts throughout the New Teſtament, without a ſingle Exception. To prevent Confuſion and Miſtake in ſo material a Point, it was highly *proper* to appropriate ſome Word to this fixed and determinate Meaning; and in *Fact* the inſpired Writers have ſo appropriated it; their Succeſſors underſtood it ſo; Some of them have noted it, and All have followed the Example

by

by uſing the Word χαρίσματα in the ſame Senſe. Whatever therefore may prove to be the Senſe of the Citation by Dr. *M.* yet it will not prove, as Mr. *T.* aſſerts, that the Word is ever uſed in the *Plural* Number, to ſignify only Gifts of an *ordinary* Kind.

Let us now look to the Paſſage itſelf. And ſhould I only repeat the Aſſertion, that "the Senſe of it is full as ſtrong and rational, "if We interpret it ſtrictly of ſupernatural "Endowments," I ſhould ſay as much for this Interpretation, as Mr. *T.* has ſaid for any other. But even this Opinion it may be obſerved, was delivered not without Caution and Reſerve. I did not ſay in Mr. *T*'s peremptory Manner, that it could be underſtood in no other Senſe, but that this was *as rational and ſtrong* as any other; plainly Meaning, that no great Streſs could either Way be laid on a Paſſage, which might without Impropriety be interpreted either Way. And I ſee no Reaſon to alter this Opinion. The Words are, Σωζέσθω ἓν ἡμῶν ὅλον τὸ σῶμα ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ ὑποτασσέσθω ἕκας ῳ τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ, καθὼς καὶ ἐτέθη ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτοῦ. *Clem.* Ep. I. ad Cor. §. 38. Mr. *T.* (P. 23.) profeſſes ingenuouſly, that this Paſſage "might have come before Him a thouſand "Times, and no Thought of ſupernatural "Endowments would once have entered

into

" into his Head." It may be ſo, but He, who afterwards rightly inſiſts on uſing his own Reaſon, excluding Human Authority in the Interpretation of ſuch Quotations, and judging for Himſelf, ſhould the more eaſily excuſe Another, who claims the ſame Privilege, and might have forborn that contemptuous Method of treating One who happened to differ from Him in Opinion. For it may poſſibly appear, that a Thought, which Mr. *T.* ſays, never once entered into his Head, might yet, without any Abſurdity, come into Another Perſon's; and with Reſpect to the Point before us, I muſt as ingenuouſly profeſs, that the Thought, which He ſo warmly explodes, was the very firſt that occurred to me on the Occaſion. When I read St. *Paul*'s Inſtructions and Exhortations to the *Corinthians* about ſupernatural Gifts, and find Him *appropriating* a particular Word to expreſs them by, when I find Him ſpecifying diſtinctly the Order of them, directing his Diſciples to regard it, and to apply them all to a good Uſe; when I obſerve Him joining the Mention of *Social Virtues* with theſe *extraordinary Endowments*, and illuſtrating the Union of all Believers by the Coherence and mutual Uſe of the ſeveral Members in the *natural* Body; When I next turn to the Writings

tings of One of his Contemporaries, addreſſed to the ſame People, on a like Occaſion, with the Uſe of the ſame Word known to be ſo *appropriated*; when I obſerve the Advice, the Connection, and the Application to be exactly *parallel*, the Thought of the ſame Meaning, in the ſame Phraſe and Method, and Deſign of Writing, preſſed unavoidably upon me as the moſt obvious Interpretation; and the Review of the Argument has confirmed me in the ſame Opinion. "Let therefore our whole "Body be ſaved in Chriſt Jeſus: And "Let Every One be ſubject to Another accord-"ing to the Order in which He is placed by "the Gift of God," ſays the Archbiſhop's Tranſlation. An *Engliſh* Reader might eaſily enough have paſſed over this without thinking of *ſupernatural* Endowments; but when We are reminded, that the Word here tranſlated *the Gift*, is the very ſame by which St. *Paul* always expreſſed *an extraordinary Gift*, where is the Difficulty or Abſurdity of Underſtanding it then, with Relation to the *Diſtinction* made amongſt them by *ſupernatural* Endowments, and the different Kinds and Degrees of them? Would not this Paſſage then bear a plain Alluſion to the Doctrine and Precepts of St. *Paul* in the xiith Chapter of his firſt Epiſtle to theſe *Corinthians*, and particularly

particularly in Verſe 28, *&c.* and be very reaſonably interpreted as a Repetition of the ſame Advice? Mr. *T.* I know, will ſay, that this Paſſage in St. *Clement* is explain'd by the ſubſequent Part of the Paragraph, which is wholly an *Exhortation* to the proper Uſe and Application of Talents natural, or naturally acquired, ſuch as Strength, Riches, Wiſdom, Purity. But I ſay again, that the Senſe will be juſt as *rational* and *ſtrong*, if This be conſidered as an *Addition to* rather than an *Explanation of* the forecited Exhortation in the Beginning of the Paragraph. The Method of the Diſcourſe will be as regular and well connected, and the Meaning of it as full and pertinent, if We ſuppoſe St. *Clement* firſt to exhort them to Humility and mutual Subjection, according to the *extraordinary Endowments* with which They were diſtinguiſhed; and then to proceed to enforce on them the like ſober and benevolent Uſe of thoſe *ordinary Talents*, which might ſeem to be more owing to Themſelves, to their own Induſtry and Merit. This is the Method which St. *Paul* in ſeveral Inſtances has obſerved, directing his Diſciples to a wiſe and pious Application of all Talents extraordinary and ordinary; ſpecifying firſt the former as of ſuperior Dignity,

nity, and then deſcending very regularly to the Mention of the latter, as St. *Clement* has done in the Paragraph before us.

But I have a farther Reaſon againſt underſtanding the After-Exhortation of St. *Clement* concerning the Uſe of *ordinary Talents*, as an Explanation of the Paſſage in Diſpute. For tho' the Archbiſhop has tranſlated it, "Let every One be Subject to Ano-"ther according to the Order in which "He is placed by *the Gift of God*," yet the Original Words are ἐν τῷ χαρίσματι αὐτοῦ, *by his Gift*, that is plainly by *the Gift of Jeſus Chriſt*, who is expreſly mentioned in the firſt Part of the Sentence. This Exhortation therefore relates to the right Management of *that Gift*, that *peculiar Gift*, which was communicated to them by their Saviour, as Head of the Church; whereas the Variety of thoſe other *common Talents*, which He ſpeaks of afterwards, ſuch as Thoſe of Strength, Riches, and the Like, were the uſual Diſpenſations of *Providence*, diſtinct from and antecedent to the Covenant of *Chriſt*; and there is Nothing in all the ſubſequent Parts of the Paragraph, but what might be as properly applied to *Heathens* as to *Believers*, which does not therefore look like a *Paraphraſe* only on the introductory Admonition addreſſed peculiarly to *Chriſtians*.

St.

St. *Clement* ſeems here, as if on Purpoſe to prevent Miſtake, to diſtinguiſh betwixt the *peculiar* Gift of *Chriſt*, and the *general* Gifts of *God*, and varies his Expreſſions with great Propriety in Relation to the different Subject, mentioning our *Saviour* particularly, whilſt He had a View to the *extraordinary* Endowments conferred by Him on his choſen Diſciples; but referring expreſly to *God* only, when He comes to ſpeak of the mutual Benefit of *common Gifts*, and enforcing the proper Application of them from Conſiderations relative only to the common Creator of all. If Mr. *T.* is diſpoſed again, upon this Correction of the Tranſlation, to obſerve that I have ſometimes a very ſlender Regard to the Archbiſhop's Authority, the old Apology of *magis amica veritas* might plead my Excuſe; but in Reality the Archbiſhop has referred to this Senſe in the *Marginal* Tranſlation, tho' not foreſeeing any Controverſy about this particular Paſſage, He thought the Alteration not material, and in ſome Reſpect or other more eaſy to the Reader.

That Paſſage of St. *Ignatius* in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, wherein he deſires them "not to prevent his Martyrdom by an unſea-"ſonable Good-will," comes next under Review. *My Father* has interpreted this as a Proof,

a Proof, that " the Prayers of the Primi-
" tive Chriſtians had Power to diſable the
" wild Beaſts from aſſaulting the Martyrs,
" who were expoſed to them." Dr. *M.* ſays This meant no more, than that They ſhould not uſe any Interceſſion or Intereſt at *Rome* to preſerve Him, and adds that to this Senſe it is expreſly reſtrained by the Relation of his Martyrdom, and by Dr. *Cave*'s Interpretation of it. Mr. *T.* approves of theſe Quotations as ſpeaking full and expreſly to his Purpoſe, and ſays " Mr. *D.* has not offered
" one Word to invalidate theſe hiſtorical
" Accounts that are given of it, and ſeem
" natural and eaſy." (P. 26.) What Kind of Anſwer is fit to be given to ſuch an Aſſertion as this? I had ſpent at leaſt four Pages on this Point, to invalidate that Senſe of thoſe hiſtorical Accounts, and to ſhew that they could not admit of that Senſe of ſaving Him by their *Intereſt* and *Interceſſion*. Dr. *Cave*'s Hiſtory and Opinion are founded on the Relation of the Martyrdom of St. *Ignatius*, and are allowed by Dr. *M.* to be only his Interpretation of that Paſſage, and ſo can give no additional Force to the Original Account. The Paſſage itſelf I cited at large, and ſhewed that the Words did not imply any more, and that the Circumſtances both of the Martyr, and of the

other

other Chriſtian Brethren at that Time, could not poſſibly admit them to imply any more, than that They ſhould not endeavour to raiſe up the Populace in his Favour againſt the Deciſion of the Emperor; which could do no Good and might do Harm. This might have been interpreted into *Sedition* by their Governors, and might have brought an Imputation on the Chriſtian Cauſe, which the Primitive Patrons of it were always ſtudious to avoid. May I not, in my Turn, aſk, Does not This Account of this Paſſage *ſeem natural and eaſy?* And was not this Interpretation of it, confirmed by ſeveral corroborating Circumſtances, *offering* at leaſt *one Word* to invalidate the Hiſtorical Accounts cited by Dr. *M.* as expreſly reſtraining it to his Purpoſe? Mr. *T.* allows that "I have indeed taken a good deal of "Pains to ſhew that *Ignatius*'s Words can "be underſtood of Nothing but *Prayers*," which I really thought was a very proper Way of proceeding, and another ſtrong Method of invalidating thoſe Hiſtorical Accounts, as explicatory of this Paſſage. Mr. *T.* prudently declines "following me thro' "the Particulars of my Reaſoning, and con-"tents Himſelf with referring the Reader "to the Epiſtle itſelf." If then He really thinks, that the Contents of an ancient

Epiſtle are beſt to be judged of, by omitting all Information relative to the Circumſtances of the *Writers*, and of the Perſons *to whom* it was *written*, and that the Knowledge of, and attentive Regard to ſuch Particulars, are more likely to miſlead Us in the Senſe of it, I ſhall leave Him to enjoy this Opinion likewiſe undiſturbed; and ſhall always Myſelf endeavour, to the beſt of my Power, to get Information in ſuch Circumſtances, as the moſt probable Means of aſcertaining the true Senſe of the Author. I ſhould have thought it had been the proper Part of a *Defender* in this Place, to have followed me thro' the Particulars of this Reaſoning, to have ſhewn, what Authority the *People of Rome* had to reverſe the Sentence paſſed by the *Emperor* Himſelf, who was then abſent; and what extraordinary Intereſt the *Chriſtians* then had amongſt the *Governors* of *Rome*, to induce them to exert their Authority in ſo high an Inſtance. His Friend Dr. *M.* We know, thinks that a Century after, " when this Religion was " much more dilated," as Mr. *T.* expreſſes it, the Friends of the Chriſtian Cauſe had not Intereſt enough to get an Apology on their Behalf preſented to the Emperor or to the Senate. It reſted on his *Defender* to reconcile this, and to ſhew what Probability

there was of the Chriſtian Brethren being able to ſave *Ignatius* by their *Intereſt* at *Rome*, which could thus raiſe his Apprehenſions of being ſtill preſerved, and induce Him to write to them in this Manner. Apparently He thought Himſelf in *Danger*, as He eſteemed it, of being ſaved ſome Way or other by their Endeavours, and therefore earneſtly entreats them not to prevent his Martyrdom by their unſeaſonable Good-will. I have offered my Reaſons, why I think it could not be by their *Intereſt*, which is Dr. *M*'s Solution of it; and I may truly ſay, that Mr. *T*. " has not offered one Word " to invalidate them."

The ſame Arguments, which ſeem to hold ſtrongly againſt the Probability of their ſaving Him by any *Interceſſion*, ſeem of equal Force againſt their doing it by *any ordinary* or Human Means. *Force*, They could not, They would not uſe on ſuch an Occaſion. Their *Number* at that Time, and their *Doctrine* at all Times, exclude the Suppoſition. The inſuperable Difficulty then of accounting for this Requeſt of the Martyr from any *natural Means*, in which the Brethren at *Rome*, could preſerve Him, ſtrongly favours the Inference drawn by my Father, concerning the *ſupernatural* Effects wrought by the *Prayers* of the Primitive Chriſtians. With this previous

vious Inſtruction as to the Situation of *Ignatius* and his Fellow-Chriſtians, I ſhall readily join with Mr. *T.* in "deſiring every One "to look over the Epiſtle itſelf, and ſee what "He can make of it." Here He will find repeated Mention of their *Prayers*, but not a Word of their *Intereſt*, or of any other *Human* Means, by which They could contribute to his Preſervation. He will find a remarkable *Antitheſis*, by which He deſires them to *promote* his Martyrdom, namely, by their *Prayers*, by which We may very reaſonably conclude, what were the Means by which He was fearful, that They ſhould *prevent* it. But in this Place Mr. *T.* charges me with a Sort of deſigned Contrivance of impoſing upon my Readers. "I obſerve" ſays He, "Mr. *D.* has brought down theſe Words, "*Pray for me, that God would give me* "*Strength*, &c. out of the Place where they "ſtand, and joined to the others, to make "them look like one entire Sentence." There could be little Danger of any Impoſition in this, as the Paſſage now ſtands, ſince the Original was ſo eaſy to be conſulted; and that it was not intended, may appear from that cautionary Remark, "*Almoſt* immedi-"ately before He ſaid, Only Pray for me, "*&c.*" But in Reality This Omiſſion was the *Tranſcribers*, or the *Printers*. In my firſt

MS. which I have now before me, I find the uſual Mark inſerted, which diſtinguiſhed the Sentences not to be immediately joined in the Original Author, and this Cenſure had been removed, if the printed Copy had anſwered the written one, which ſtands thus, "*Pray for me that God would give* "*me Strength that I may not only be called a* "*Chriſtian, but may alſo be found one---I am* "*willing to die for God, unleſs you hinder* "*me.*" However, no different Subject is introduced by *Ignatius*, betwixt theſe Sentences, no Conſideration but what is *relative* to the Caſe of his own Suffering. Both *before* and *after* the Mention of their *Prevention of his Martyrdom by an unſeaſonable Good-will*, which He ſo earneſtly diſſuades them from, He deſires their *Prayers* to contribute towards it; and if any Thing can be judged of at all from the *Context*, certainly this Connection is a ſtrong Indication, that He feared They would *prevent* by their *Prayers*, what He was ſo vehemently deſirous to *accompliſh by that Means.*

Mr. *T.* obſerves, that Archbiſhop *Wake* has in the Margin tranſlated it, unleſs You *forbid* me, inſtead of *hinder* me, and thinks this Word "manifeſtly implies ſome other "Kind of Interpoſition different and diſ-"tinct from that of *Prayer.*" (P. 27.) I do

not

not ſee the Difference. Either Word might very properly be uſed, if they croſſed his earneſt Deſire of Martyrdom by any Method whatever; and they might be ſaid to *forbid* his Departure at leaſt as well by fervent *Applications* to the Throne of *Heaven*, as by their *Interceſſions* to the Powers of the *Earth*. In the former They had good Intereſt, in the latter They had none at all, nor could at that Time have ſufficient to that Purpoſe. The Inconſiſtency of Dr. *M*'s Interpretation is a Confirmation of this, and the Difficulty of putting any other Senſe upon it, ſtrengthens that, which moſt obviouſly ariſes from the Import and Connection of the Epiſtle itſelf.

But Mr. *T*. has yet a farther Reſerve. He has learned of Dr. *M*. when He is preſſed with the Evidence which lies before them, to go off from that and to call for other, which He knows or thinks cannot be had; and then to declare, that that only would be ſatisfactory to him. Thus the Dr. inſiſted, that Thoſe, who would anſwer Him, muſt add to the Accounts of the Primitive Writers, and that when They aſſert, that many were raiſed from the Dead, They muſt ſpecify, *Who* the particular Perſons were, that were ſo raiſed: And thus Mr. *T*. deſires that "an "Inſtance may be authentically vouched of

"ſome other Perſon, who was at that Time "actually delivered from apparent Death "by Virtue of *Prayer*, and then He will "give up the Debate." If ſuch an Inſtance had been upon Record, We need not have been arguing ſo long upon the *Circumſtances* of this, and from the Manner, in which this Controverſy has been managed, I make no Doubt but Evaſions would have been found in ſuch a Caſe however authentically vouched. But if there are ſtrong Teſtimonies of ſupernatural Effects wrought by the *Prayers* of the Faithful, This will be a ſtrong Confirmation of this Interpretation of St. *Ignatius*'s Requeſt, and the Want of other *particular Inſtances* on Record will no more invalidate the *General Evidence* than in the Caſe of raiſing the Dead mentioned by Dr. *M.*

Now there is very remarkable Evidence both *before* and *after* this Epiſtle of *Ignatius* to the *Romans*, ſetting forth the Power of the *Prayers* of the Church in the Preſervation of *their* Lives, whoſe Continuance in it was of Importance to the Chriſtian Cauſe, and which may reaſonably be admitted as a Comment on his Requeſt, who was ſo zealous for Martyrdom. He appears not to have been without Grounds for his Apprehenſions of being preſerved this Way, but

has

has a plain Allusion to the Reasoning and Determination of St. *Paul* on the same Subject. That Apostle plainly and repeatedly ascribes his Deliverances, even his *extraordinary* ones, to the Supplications of the Faithful on his Behalf. In the 1st Chap. of his 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, ver. 8, &c. He says, *We would not, Brethren, have You Ignorant of our Trouble, which came to Us in* Asia, *that We were pressed out of Measure, above Strength, insomuch that We despaired even of Life: But We had the Sentence of Death in Ourselves, that We should not trust in Ourselves, but in God which raiseth the Dead, who delivered Us from so great a Death, and doth deliver: In whom We trust that he will yet deliver Us: You also helping together by Prayer for Us, that for the Gift bestowed on Us by the Means of many Persons, Thanks may be given by Many on our Behalf.* Here the χάρισμα, the *extraordinary* Gift of his Deliverance, in a Case quite desperate, is expressly attributed to the united *Prayers* of the Church. In his Epistle to the *Philippians*, wherein He mentions *the Strait that He was under*, betwixt his Desire of Death for his own Sake, and his Desire of Life for the farther Service of the Church, readily determining like *Ignatius*, that for Himself it was *far better to depart*

and to be with Christ, yet declares his Foresight, that they would preserve Him longer in Life by their Devotion. *I know*, says He, *that this shall turn to my Salvation*, or Deliverance, as it should have been rendered, *thro' your Prayer and the Supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ*; v. 19. That by σωτηρία was here meant Salvation or Deliverance from his present Imprisonment is plain not only by the preceding Mention of his additional Affliction in Bonds, but also from the Repetition of the same Thing in the 25th Verse, just after the Determination of the fore-mentioned Strait, *I know that I shall abide and continue with You all for your Furtherance and Joy of Faith.* He says the same Thing in his Epistle to *Philemon*, written during the same Confinement. *Prepare me also a Lodging, for I trust that through your Prayers I shall be given unto you*, v. 22. Might not this repeated Mention by St. *Paul* of his Preservation and longer Continuance in Life, as owing to the *Prayers* of the Faithful, very reasonably be thought to make *Ignatius* apprehensive, that He might meet with some extraordinary Deliverance by the same Means, which therefore He earnestly deprecates, as being *desirous* of the Honour of Martyrdom, and of an immediate Release in his now advanced Age? In this View his

Request

Request in his Epistle was natural and rational, and such as He could scarce avoid making in that Case, when He was not desirous Himself of any such supernatural Interposition in his Favour, as Others might be desirous of for Him. How could He do otherwise, in such a Situation, than beg fervently of them, that They would not attempt his miraculous Deliverance by particular *Supplications* on his Behalf? The particular Injunction of St. *James*, concerning the Use of *Prayer* in miraculous Interpositions in the Case of *Healing*, is not foreign to this Point. The Interposition was as supernatural in the Case of a Deliverance from a desperate Disease, as from a desperate Persecution, and *Devotion* was no more a *natural* Means of effecting the One than the Other. The Text referred to, I am sensible, is not without some Difficulty on every Interpretation, but it is sufficiently plain, that it related to the *extraordinary* Gift of Healing, to be effected by *Praying* and *Anointing with Oyl*. This is evident from the Phrases, ἡ εὐχὴ τῆς πίστεως σώσει τὸν κάμνοντα, — and πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη. These Expressions imply such *Prayer* as is founded on the *Faith of Miracles*, or is uttered by the immediate Impulse of the Spirit; and This Sense of them is confirmed by the Example immediately

ately given of *Elias*, who by such Impulse first brought on a long Drought by his *Prayers*, and at length reversed it by the same Method. The joint Prescription of *Anointing with Oyl*, and especially the Doing it *in the Name of the Lord*, that is, of *Christ Jesus*, was an additional Proof, that the Case spoken of was that of a *miraculous Cure*, and the Success is here expresly ascribed to the *Devotions* of the Faithful. If the Person was desirous of such an extraordinary Interposition in his Favour, and the Elders of the Church being called together on the Occasion found themselves endowed with the *Faith of Miracles*, or thought this Occasion worthy of such an extraordinary Interposition, and that the General Promise was applicable to the particular Instance before them, then They might proceed with Authority and Security, and their *Prayer* should certainly prove effectual to the Recovery of the Person for whom They interceded. This *Text* is, I think, "an authentick Voucher, that Some "Persons were at that Time actually delivered "from apparent Death by Virtue of *Pray-*"*er*;" and tho' this was not in the Case of a Persecution, yet where the Importance of the Person's Preservation was thought worthy such an extraordinary Interposition, there in the Reason of the Thing, the Use

and

and Intent of the *Faith of Miracles*, and the Means of exerting it by *Prayers*, were juſt as applicable in every Caſe, whether the apparent Death, as Mr. *T.* calls it, was threatned by *natural* or *violent* Means. *Ignatius* might well think Himſelf to be of Conſequence enough for the Elders of the Church to interpoſe in this Manner on his Behalf, and therefore inſtead of deſiring *ſupernatural* Aſſiſtance on the Occaſion, He deſires rather, that the very Means of it might not then be uſed.

It may perhaps be thought ſtill more to the Purpoſe, that the ſame Means of miraculouſly preſerving ſome eminent Saints were ſucceſsfully practiſed *after* the Time of *Ignatius*, and that even where Death had not been prevented, Life was reſtored by the Prayers of the Faithful. The Teſtimony of *Irenæus*, elſewhere cited by Dr. *M.* is full to this Point. "As our Lord and his Apoſtles "ſays He, raiſed the Dead by *Prayer*, ſo "in our Communion, very often upon ſome "*neceſſary Occaſion*, when the whole Church, "that is in any ſuch Place, has entreated "it by Faſting and continued *Supplication*, "the Spirit of the Dead Perſon has return-"ed into Him, and the Man was given back "to the Prayers of the Saints. *Quemadmo-*"*dum Dominus excitavit*, (ſc. mortuos) &

"*Apoſtoli*

" *Apoſtoli per Orationem; & in Fraternitate,*
" *ſæpiſſime propter aliquid neceſſarium, ea quæ*
" *eſt in quoque Loco, Eccleſia univerſa poſtu-*
" *lante per Jejunium & Supplicationem mul-*
" *tam, reverſus eſt Spiritus mortuo, & donatus*
" *eſt Homo Orationibus Sanctorum.*" Iren. adv. Hær. Lib. II. C. 56. This is, I think, an authentick Teſtimony of more than a ſingle Inſtance of a Perſon delivered not from *apparent* but *actual Death*, by Virtue of *Prayer*, a plain Intimation of the Method, by which *Ignatius* meant to deſire, that they would not prevent his Releaſe, and a ſtrong Confirmation of my Father's Opinion before cited, that the *Prayers* of the Primitive Chriſtians had at leaſt as much Power as He has aſcribed to them.

Mr. *T.* proceeds exulting (P. 27.) " Will " Mr. *D.* then perſiſt in affirming, that the " Arguments of the Archbiſhop and his " Father ſtand in their full Force for any " Thing the Dr. has ſaid againſt them? " Truly," ſays He, " I ſhould believe no " Man upon Conſideration can well be ſo " ſanguine." Mr. *D.* finds not the leaſt Reaſon to abate any Thing of his Aſſertion either from what Dr. *M.* has offered, or his Second has added, nay He is the more firmly perſwaded of the Truth of it, from this Review of their united Objections. Nor does

He think that Mr. *T.* has ſupported his Reflection on the two forementioned Writers with any Degree of Argument equal to the Nature and Freedom of the Cenſure, that "They were poſſeſſed of a Notion, which "though perhaps They knew not well how "They came by, They were willing to "maintain, and as They could find no "better Arguments to fetch in to their Aſ-"ſiſtance, They were compelled to em-"ploy ſuch as are weak and inconcluſive, "&c". (P. 28.) This is much more eaſily ſaid than proved. They came by their Notion from a very intimate Acquaintance with the Writings of all the Primitive Fathers, and a Critical Knowledge of their Style and Language, as well as of their particular Situation and Circumſtances. They offered their Reaſons for their Opinion, which I am ſtill ſo ſanguine as to believe will be thought the more firmly eſtabliſhed by the Attempts which have been made to invalidate them.

Mr. *T.* returns to me and my Obſervations. I had ſaid, with a View to theſe Primitive Martyrs, whoſe Teſtimonies We have been reviewing, that "They ſpoke and wrote "juſt as it muſt be ſuppoſed that They "would have done, if Miracles were com-"monly worked among them;" Mr. *T.* declares his Opinion to be directly the contra-

ry,

ry, and then asks, (P. 28.) "Who has the "beſt Right and Claim to the Concluſion; "They who aſſert, or They who deny the "Propoſition?" By all Means They, who give the *beſt Reaſons* for their Opinion. But He adds, "You ſay the Writers of the "Time prove it; Dr. *M.* ſays They are ſi-"lent upon it: Can any Proof be drawn from "their Silence? If We are to believe it, it "muſt be upon ſome Evidence. If there "be no Evidence, Who is to believe it?" It is really no eaſy or agreeable Task to argue with a Gentleman, who can in this Manner *miſtake* or *miſrepreſent* the State of the Caſe, and who needs continually to be reminded of the Point, which it lay upon Him, as the *Defender* of Dr. *M.* to prove. He repeats the Miſtake, which He has ſhewn in the Lines juſt now cited, P. 36. where He deſires to "appeal to Myſelf, and on "the Suppoſition, that I had never heard "any Thing concerning the Continuance of "theſe Powers, and was now to be con-"vinced of it, candidly to ask me, whether "I ſincerely think, that the Teſtimonies "which have been alledged, and juſt been "examined, are of Weight enough to pro-"duce this Conviction." To which it will be ſufficient to anſwer, that This is not the Queſtion in Diſpute betwixt Dr. *M.* and his

Oppo-

Opponents. The Teſtimonies from the Apoſtolical Fathers are not the *only*, or the *principal* Evidences produced for the Conviction of Thoſe, who queſtion the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church. When They are compared with the *like Expreſſions* by the Apoſtles in the Age immediately preceding, which did unqueſtionably relate to *miraculous* Powers, and with the declared *End* and *Intent* of ſuch ſupernatural Gifts, *which Reaſons* continued to ſubſiſt in their full Force in their Time, — and with the *poſitive Evidence* of thoſe Writers immediately ſucceeding them, whoſe View in Writing led them to make Mention of them, and who accordingly did actually claim the Continuance of ſuch Powers; — When They are thus conſidered with all collateral Circumſtances, they now appear plainly to me to relate to the ſame *miraculous* Gifts, whether they might of themſelves alone have proved ſufficient or not, to have worked the ſame Conviction, if I had been ignorant of the *Situation* or *Style* of the Writers, and of every *other Particular* relating to them. But in the preſent Light attending them, they are ſatisfactorily to be vindicated from Dr. *M*'s Interpretation of them, and much more ſtrongly from the Application which He wanted to make of them to his own Purpoſe.

He

He urges the *ſuppoſed Silence* of theſe firſt Writers, as a preſumptive Argument againſt the poſitive and expreſs Teſtimonies of the ſubſequent ones, and then endeavours to ſhew, that the Paſſages, which are uſually brought from theſe Apoſtolical Epiſtles to confirm the received Opinion, *may* be otherwiſe interpreted. It would be a competent Anſwer to this Objection, ſhould We allow all theſe Paſſages to be really *doubtful*, and inſufficient of themſelves to work any abſolute Conviction either Way, ſince whilſt they remain capable of *either* Interpretation, no Argument can be drawn from them to the Diſadvantage of the more expreſs Teſtimonies of ſucceeding Writers. Thoſe more expreſs Teſtimonies may well aſcertain the Meaning of the foregoing *dubious* ones, but cannot be any Ways hurt or leſſened by them. You muſt firſt take it granted, that theſe latter are falſified, before You can make any Application of the former to your Purpoſe. Nothing could have been of any Weight to diſprove all After-Pretenſions, but the Poſitive *Diſclaiming* of theſe Powers by theſe Apoſtolical Writers, which would indeed have made it highly improbable, that They ſhould have been *revived* in ſucceeding Times. But the poor Attempt of Dr. *M.* to prove this is the ſingle Point, which

Mr.

Mr. T. has thought fit to give up, tho' it was the only one which it was material to his Argument on this Head to have maintained. Nothing leſs than this can tend to invalidate the *diſtinct* and *expreſs Evidence* of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in After Times; ſince if We find ſuch Evidence afterwards, We find Expreſſions in theſe, which may reaſonably be interpreted by them. If it can be ſhewn, that there are Expreſſions *capable* of ſuch a Senſe, and that the Context is as rational and conſiſtent according to this Senſe as any other, then tho' our Deciſion upon the Whole be not peremptory or demonſtrative, yet it is ſufficiently concluſive againſt the Force of Dr. *M*'s Objection, or the Uſe which He attempted to make of it. Mr. *T.* is inclined to believe, the Teſtimonies of theſe Apoſtolical Writers would not have convinced any one of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers, who had heard Nothing of them before, or as I ſhould chuſe to expreſs it, who had no other Reaſons to believe them. If We ſhould allow this, yet ſtill We may inſiſt, that Dr. *M.* cannot prove the *Silence* of theſe firſt Writers, nor much leſs therefore build any Thing upon it to hurt the Credit of the ſucceeding Witneſſes. Theſe are very diſtinct Queſtions,

tho' Mr. *T.* has repeatedly confounded them. The Argument of their Meaning, as drawn by *Inferences*, if not alone ſufficient to eſtabliſh the main Point of the Continuance of Miracles amongſt them, is however ſufficient to obviate the Doctor's Exception of their having *omitted* the Mention of them. When therefore I ſaid, that "theſe Primitive Martyrs ſpoke and wrote juſt as it muſt be ſuppoſed that They would have done, if Miracles were commonly worked among them." This is abundantly juſtified by the Paſſages, which have been produced from them, wherein they uſed the ſame Phraſes that Others had without Queſtion uſed of *miraculous* Gifts, without any Intimation, that They meant them in a *different* Senſe, and farther referred to Events, which could not be accompliſhed by natural Means, and which ſeveral Parallel Paſſages have ſhewn, were then frequently brought about by *ſupernatural* Interpoſition.

To return then to Mr. *T*'s Queries, Theſe Proofs I apprehend give a better Right and Claim to the Concluſion of Thoſe, who *vindicate* the forementioned Aſſertion, than to that of Thoſe who *reject* it. The Teſtimonies of theſe Writers, as every Way circumſtantiated, do in my Judgment ſtrongly prove a *Reference* to miraculous Gifts, as then ſubſiſting,

ſiſting, but at leaſt they exclude a Poſſibility of proving the contrary from their Writings, without begging the Queſtion, as to the Sufficiency of the ſucceeding Evidence. Mr. *T*'s own Conceſſion, that if there are any other Arguments for the main Queſtion, theſe Expreſſions of doubtful Signification may very fitly be applied to the Confirmation of them, is all that We deſire at preſent, and will obviate all the Force of Dr. *M*'s preſumptive Argument from their ſuppoſed Omiſſion of the Mention of them. It will alſo anſwer in Part his own Enquiry, "Can any Proof "be drawn from their Silence?" Their *Silence* itſelf, will, by his own Account, remain a *queſtionable* Point, till it appears for certain, that the After-Claims were groundleſs, and therefore till their Validity is examined, nothing can poſſibly be proved on their Side, from a Silence, which is not, cannot yet be proved itſelf. But were that Point never ſo clear, whatever is the Weight of this Enquiry, it is wholly applicable on our Side. "Can "any Proof be drawn from their Silence?" Does the Omiſſion of many Particulars by *Three* of the Evangeliſts invalidate the expreſs Teſtimony of the *Fourth* concerning them? Would the Apoſtolical Fathers not contradicting it, deſtroy the Credibility of Others who aſſert it, who muſt know the Truth of what

they aſſerted, had no Worldly Intereſt to ſupport by this Means, and who muſt have been detected and brought to Shame, if They had groundleſſly made ſuch a Claim? Particularly could the *Silence* of Thoſe, who had no particular Buſineſs or Occaſion to mention miraculous Powers, be any Prejudice againſt the *Poſitive Claim* of Thoſe, whoſe very Subject called them to the Mention of it, who did accordingly challenge them publickly in the Face of their Enemies, and who remarkably ſupported Each Other's Teſtimony by the Unanimity of their Claim in all Parts of the World? What Mr. *T.* adds of the Unreaſonableneſs of expecting Belief without Evidence, is as applicable to every other Subject in the World, and to every other Part of this, and will occaſion no Controverſy between Us. We deſire no One to believe *without* Evidence, but we deſire ſtrong Reaſons, why We ſhould not believe Evidence ſo ſtrongly ſupported, as is That of the Continuance of Miracles in the Primitive Church, both by the Credibility of the Facts, and of the Witneſſes.

The Hiſtory of the Miracles attending St. *Polycarp*'s Martyrdom is the next Point to be conſidered. Mr. *T*'s firſt Obſervation on it is, (P. 29.) that "it ſtands at a great Diſ-"tance off in the *Free Inquiry*." It does ſo,

at

at a much greater than in the Courſe of the Argument, and this has been properly cenſured, as an undue Piece of Art and Management. But Mr. *T.* adds, that "it does not "fall in Point of Time within the profeſſed "Deſign and Method of the Doctor's Argu-"ment;" that is, the Doctor choſe to limit his Obſervations of the *Silence* of the Primitive Writers to half a Century after the Apoſtles, on Purpoſe, I ſuppoſe, that this expreſs Teſtimony might not be urged againſt Him. But however it ought to have been introduced before ſeveral others, which He has mentioned under this firſt Head; and He Himſelf, tho' He deferred his choiceſt Obſervations on it, till his Reader was better prepared for them, yet thought it to his Purpoſe to mention this Narrative in this very Place, and to beſtow a curſory Remark on it; which might well juſtify any Anſwerer in taking the Whole of what He had offered, into Conſideration in this as its proper Place. I had obſerved, that the Doctor allows that this is "One of the moſt authentic "and celebrated Pieces in all Primitive An-"tiquity," but Mr. *T.* will not grant that this Conceſſion can turn againſt Himſelf, for ſays He, "I apprehend, tho' Dr. *M.* allows "this Letter to be genuine, that is, to be "really written from the Church of *Smyrna*,

" that yet He ſuppoſes it to be written by " a Collection of Men who were deceived, " and concurred in giving an Account that " was not true." (P. 29.) I am glad that the Evaſion is not, that They *intended to deceive*, and invented the Account for the Honour of their Martyr; for ſince the Charge only is, that They were *deceived*, then the other Obſervation which I had before made, comes in full to the Purpoſe, that the Miraculous Circumſtances attending the Martyrdom were as much *Matters of Facts*, that fell under the *Senſes* of the Spectators, as any Parts of the Account, and were as ſtrongly atteſted by them.

Mr. *T.* proceeds to Particulars. " The " Voice from Heaven," ſays He, " Dr. *M.* " thinks may very eaſily be ſuppoſed to " come from One amongſt the Croud, and " will Any Body ſay that it might not? If a bare *Poſſibility* of a Fact's being otherwiſe than it is repreſented to be by Thoſe who were preſent at it, and who do not ſtand impeached of any fraudulent Deſign in the Relation, be ſufficient to evade their poſitive Evidence, then no Teſtimony can confirm any Fact whatſoever. For are there any ſuſpicious Circumſtances either in the Reporters Themſelves, or in this Part of their Report, which might ſtrengthen the

Suggeſtion

Suggeſtion of ſuch a Poſſibility? Neither Dr. *M.* nor his Defender have laid any Thing more to their Charge than that They were *deceived*, and their Circumſtances, and Doctrines, and Practices, would have been abundantly ſufficient to have cleared them from any Imputation of *Guile* and *Art*, if That had been fixed on them. How then is it to be proved that they were *deceived* in their Account? Why, it ſeems, there was a *Poſſibility* of their being deceived. But what *Reaſon* is there to believe, that They were *actually* impoſed upon in this Particular? Was there Any Thing in the *Occaſion* unworthy of a Divine Interpoſition? Was there Any Thing in this *Manner* of interpoſing by a Voice from Heaven ridiculous, or new, or unſuitable to former Diſpenſations? Neither of Theſe can be maintained by Any One, who agrees with Dr. *M*'s profeſſed Principles. Why then ſhould We imagine, that They ſhould make ſo ſtrange a Miſtake, as that of interpreting an Exclamation from One amongſt the Crowd into *a Voice from Heaven*? People may in Speculation imagine almoſt any Thing, but would it be poſſible, do theſe Gentlemen think, that ſuch another Miſtake could happen, and that a whole Crowd, who were preſent at an Execution, could be impoſed

upon, by any Contrivance or Accident, to interpret a Voice from among Themſelves, to come really from Heaven? When Mr. *T.* therefore aſks, "Will Any Body ſay that "this Voice might not come from the "Crowd?" I anſwer there is a *ſtrong Preſumption* upon the firſt Face of the Account, and a *ſtronger* from the farther Conſideration of the Thing, that it *might not*, and that it *could not*. The Cauſe, the Method, the Reaſon of the Thing, confirm the Credibility of the Fact, and the Nature of the Thing, confirm the Credibility of the Fact, and the Nature of the Thing, which the numerous Spectators could not All be miſtaken in, ſecures the *Credibility* of the *Witneſſes*, and obviates the Imputation of their being *deceived* in this Article. Dr. *M.* intimates an Objection from a Circumſtance in the Account, which indeed ſtrongly makes againſt Him, and excludes almoſt a Poſſibility of their Miſtaking in this Particular. He firſt obſerves, that "the Voice pretended to "come from Heaven was heard only by a "Few." (P. 220.) I would deſire to know on what Authority This is ſaid. The Original affirms that the Chriſtians then preſent heard the Voice, who cannot well be thought to be but a Few on ſuch an Occaſion. τὴν δὲ φωνὴν τῶν ἡμετέρων οἱ παρόντες ἤκουσαν.

ἤκουσαν. *Euſebius*'s Account is more full to the Purpoſe, for He ſays expreſſly that *Many* heard this Voice. Τῶν ἡμετέρων πολλοὶ ἤκουσαν. (*Euſeb.* Eccl. Hiſt. Lib. IV. Cap. 15.) The *Chronicon Alexandrinum* ſays the ſame. Τὴν δὲ φωνὴν πολλοὶ καὶ τῶν ἡμετέρων ἤκουσαν. The Objection farther intended is that "the Voice "pretended to come from Heaven was heard "in a Time of ſuch Hurry in which Nothing "could be heard diſtinctly. If ſuch a Voice "therefore had been uttered by Any One "in the Crowd, as it was hardly poſſible to "diſcern whence it came, ſo Thoſe, whoſe "Zeal and Imagination were particularly "affected by ſo moving an Occaſion, might "eaſily miſtake it for miraculous." (Free Inquiry, P. 220.) Now this very Circumſtance recorded in the Words immediately preceding the Account of the Voice, that "there was ſo great a Tumult that "No Body could be heard" is, I think, a ſtrong Confirmation that this Voice, which was diſtinct and audible enough to reach the Ears of the many Chriſtians preſent, muſt really have come from Heaven, and could not poſſibly in that Noiſe and Tumult have come from a private Perſon. The particular Mention of this *Noiſe* ſeems to have been inſerted, more to obviate ſuch an Inſinuation,

ſinuation, than for any other Purpoſe which can well be aſſigned.

Mr. *T.* next embraces and defends the weakeſt Remark in the *Free Inquiry*, in the Attempt to account by natural Cauſes for the Arch formed by the Flames over the Head of St. *Polycarp*, which preſerved him from being conſumed by them. This has been ſo handſomely expoſed by another Writer, that They who peruſe his Remarks on it, will I believe ſcarce think it neceſſary, if it were poſſible, to make ſuch a Suppoſition more ridiculous. (See *Jackſon*'s Remarks, P. 9, &c.) Mr. *T.* has added nothing new on this Point, or at leaſt Nothing but what improves the Inconſiſtency. "There might probably" He ſays, "be ſomething odd and uncom-"mon in the Diſpoſition of theſe Flames, "which the prodigious Zeal of theſe Spec-"tators that is known to be the Parent of "Credulity, preſently heighten'd into an "Interpoſition from Heaven." (P. 30.) But pray conſider the *Effect* of this *Something which was odd and uncommon in the Diſpoſition of theſe Flames.* It was *Something*, whatever it was, that preſerved the Martyr from periſhing by the Flames, and obliged his Perſecutors to diſpatch Him in another Method. Their Zeal and their Credulity could not occaſion a Miſtake in this Particular.

They

They could not be *deceived* in ſuch a Matter of Fact, but they muſt have told a *wilful Lie*, if there was not really a miraculous Interpoſition to preſerve Him from the Flames. The Method of his Preſervation, by the Formation of an Arch over his Head, was the moſt probable one that can well be thought of, and if their Zeal had not quite blinded them, was as much the Object of their Senſes as the very Attempt of Burning Him; and no ſuch Arch could poſſibly have been formed by natural Cauſes as could Anſwer to this Effect. Why He was preſerved from this Death only to be delivered to another, is a diſtinct Queſtion, not neceſſary now to be enlarged on, for tho' Dr. *M.* aimed at making an Objection of this Point, I do not find Him ſupported in it by Mr. *T.* who may therefore be preſumed not to think it of any Force. But He is reſolved however to defeat the Teſtimony of this Miracle by connecting with it the Circumſtance of the *Dove*, which He thinks will hang as a Dead Weight on the Whole; and that it is an authentic Part of the Narrative, He argues from Dr. *M*'s Obſervation, that "all "the oldeſt Copies ſtill extant, retain this "Paſſage; which He thinks it lay upon "me to have diſproved." But I think that Dr. *M.* had Himſelf ſaved an Anſwerer the

Trouble

Trouble of diſproving this by referring to what Archbiſhop *Wake* and *my Father* had offered on this Point, and leaving their Arguments whole and unanſwered. They had Both expreſly given this Reaſon for rejecting it, that neither *Euſebius*, nor *Ruſinus*, nor any other the moſt early Writers had mentioned it, who could not be ſuppoſed to have omitted ſo remarkable a Circumſtance, if it had been reported and credited in their Time. The Inſertion of it afterwards was not difficult to be accounted for, (ſuch Additions and Interpolations having often happened in the Tranſcribing of Hiſtorical Accounts) but the *Omiſſion* of it by ſuch eminent Authors is much more than a bare Preſumption againſt it. And ſince Archbiſhop *Uſhers*, *MS.* is confeſſedly later than *Euſebius*, therefore the Dr's Argument from the oldeſt Copies turns againſt Himſelf; and He muſt expect a great Degree of Inattention in his Readers, or a great *Inclination* to his Opinion, when He could thus venture to ſupport, by a mere poſitive Aſſertion, an Account which had been obviated by ſuch conſiderable Reaſons, without any Attempt of weakening or replying to thoſe Reaſons. Neither could Dr. *M.* be Ignorant that another *plauſible* Solution at leaſt was given of this Difficulty from a ſuppoſed

Concurrence

Concurrence of the Words in the *MS.* where the Careleſſneſs or Miſtake of the Tranſcriber might, thro' a ſmall Variation or two, reduce it from a very plain and intelligible Senſe to that which occaſions the preſent Difficulty. Theſe Things at leaſt deſerved ſome Notice, and are of more Weight than a magiſterial Determination, that "all the oldeſt Copies ſtill extant, "from which Archbiſhop *Uſher* and other "Learned Men publiſhed their ſeveral Edi-"tions, retain this Paſſage." Theſe *All* prove upon Examination to be but *One* only, from which the Other copied, and ſo a ſingle Error might eaſily be ſpread into future Editions; but if there were more ſtill extant which retained this Paſſage, yet if Thoſe, who ſaw the earlieſt Accounts, not now extant, have not retained it, may not this paſs as a very probable Argument at leaſt, that there was no ſuch Paſſage in the Original Accounts, but that it was a Miſtake ſome way or other crept into the later Copies of it? For a full Account of this I ſhall refer to Dr. *Smith*'s Note on this Paſſage, which I preſume Dr. *M.* could not but have ſeen, from whom I ſhall only cite this Sentence to balance the Opinion and Authority of Dr. *M.* "Quod nulli funda-"mento innititur, & plane incertiſſimum eſt,

"vetuſtis

"vetuſtis ſive Græcis, ſive Latinis omnino "obmuteſcentibus, nullâq. Traditione, ne "leviſſimâ quidem, de hoc Portento apud "illos ſervatâ."

Mr. *T.* thinks that the other Circumſtance of the *vaſt Effuſion of Blood* is little leſs incredible than that of the *Dove*, and is a Difficulty that wants a Solution. But as the Fire is repreſented to be ſo near extinguiſhed already, that the Perſecutors ſaw there was no farther Proſpect of *Polycarp*'s being conſumed by it, and that the Executioner could without Danger go cloſe to Him to ſtab Him; and as Old Men as well as Others are ſometimes apt to be *Plethorick*, (of which there are ſome remarkable Inſtances in the *Engliſh* Hiſtory) there ſeems no Improbability, without the Suppoſition of a Miracle, but that a great Stream of Blood iſſuing from the Wound, and falling exactly upon the little Remains of Fire, might eaſily extinguiſh them. That the Veins of the Martyr ſhould in his old Age be ſo plentifully ſupplied, and that the Effuſion of his Blood ſhould fall directly on the Flames intended to conſume Him, might ſeem *Providential*, tho' not *ſupernatural*, and might well occaſion that Notice which the Hiſtory tells Us it did, as diſtinguiſhing the Sufferings of the Faithful. Had Mr. *T.*

looked

looked a little farther into this Matter, He might poſſibly have found ſome reaſonable Solution of his Difficulties, might have diſtinguiſhed the Genuine *original* Account from the *Additions* to it, or *Miſrepreſentations* of it, and might not have been left ſo remedileſs, as he repreſents Himſelf. "So that "I ſee," ſays He, "no Remedy, but We "muſt ſhut our Eyes, and ſwallow all in "a Lump together; No Objection can ariſe "againſt the *Credibility* of the *Atteſters* "from the *Incredibility* of the Things *at-teſted*. This is the Doctrine laid down "for Us to go by, and perhaps 'tis well "for Thoſe, who can thus *believe* in the "Groſs." (P. 31, 32.) What Mr. *T.* intended by this laſt Sentence, He beſt knows: If it was meant as a Reflection on me, as it muſt be, to make it pertinent, I hope that I have given little Occaſion for ſo unhandſome an Inſinuation. I have elſewhere endeavoured to aſcertain the Nature and Extent of a *Rational Faith*, and to guard it carefully againſt the Extremes of Superſtition and Unbelief. And tho' 'tis as well, and better, for Thoſe who can *believe in the Groſs*, as for Thoſe who can *diſbelieve in the Groſs*, and undermine the Foundation of all Faith, yet have I never attempted to exclude our *Reaſon* from its proper Share in

every

every ſuch Enquiry; but only deſire to add this Caution, that *our Reaſon* is not the *Reaſon of God*, nor have We his *infinite Wiſdom* to judge of all his all-wiſe Proceedings.

Mr. *T.* adds that "if this Miracle was "fairly made out to be true in all its Cir-"cumſtances, yet it would prove Nothing "againſt the *Free Inquiry*." Dr. *M*'s Poſition, He ſays, is, "that God Almighty did "not continue to work Miracles by the "Agency or Inſtrumentality of Man; that "He ceaſed to inveſt Men with any ſuch "ſtanding Powers, as He had done in "the Days of the Apoſtles; but that it by no "Means follows from hence, that He might "not ſuſpend or reverſe the Laws of Na-"ture upon any Occaſion, that in his Wiſ-"dom He ſhould think worthy of it." (P. 33.) Whether Dr. *M.* will approve of this Part of the Defence, or accept of this Diſtinction pointed out in his Favour, I cannot tell; but I rather conjecture that He will not; becauſe his Title-Page, and the whole Courſe of his enſuing Arguments, ſeem plainly levelled againſt *all* miraculous Interpoſitions whatſoever. Beſides, Mr. *T.* ſays the Diſtinction is *very obvious*, and therefore I cannot think, that it could have eſcaped the Dr. Himſelf, if He had intended it; or that He would have waſted his own

Time,

Time, and put his Anſwerers into a wrong Method, by arguing Himſelf againſt the Truth of ſuch Reports, as had, it ſeems, no Relation to the Queſtion in Diſpute. But whether Dr. *M.* will now adopt this Diſtinction or not, the Impartial will judge what is the Foundation or Force of it. If God Almighty thought fit to continue any ſupernatural Interpoſitions in the Church, for the Reaſons before aſſigned by Dr. *M.* of over-ruling the Prejudices of Gainſayers, or of ſupporting the Minds of Believers, it will be hard to aſſign a Reaſon, why the Agency and Inſtrumentality of *Men Themſelves* ſhould at that Interval be laid aſide, and more *immediate* Interpoſitions of the *Deity* be continued; when, according to our beſt Judgment, theſe in Conjunction would beſt anſwer the Purpoſe, and were thus given in Conjunction by God Himſelf in the preceding Ages. I will readily allow, that God Almighty might have good Reaſons to ſuppreſs the One and continue the Other, which We may not diſcern; but it concerns Thoſe, who expect to account for Every Thing by their Reaſon, to point out ſome Difference, and if They examine never ſo critically the Cauſe, the Credibility, the Effects, or any other Circumſtance of the Divine Interpoſition by *Himſelf*, rather than by his *Creatures*, no Advantage

will ariſe to their Cauſe by the Compariſon. Thoſe who pretend not to direct their Maker, can form no better Judgment of ſuch Caſes than by *Analogy*, by Obſervations on the Proceedings of infinite Wiſdom in parallel Caſes, and this will lead us to believe that if he continued to favour his Church in thoſe After-Ages, with ſuch diſtinguiſhed Care, as Himſelf to ſuſpend or reverſe the Laws of Nature on their Behalf on ſome important Occaſons, He did likewiſe Favour the Perſons Themſelves with ſupernatural Endowments on ſuch like momentous Exigences. The Reaſon is, that heretofore both under the Old and New Teſtament, We find theſe particular Favours granted *together*, and We can point out no particular Reaſon why they ſhould be ſeparated at the Time We are ſpeaking of. This Kind of Argument is uſed by Mr. *T.* Himſelf, where He thought it of Service to his Cauſe, and it is particularly applicable to the preſent Caſe. "This was the Method that God Almighty "proceeded in with Reſpect to the Mira-"cles of the Goſpel-Age, and may We "not conjecture with ſome Shew of Pro-"bability, that ſo long as He ſaw it con-"venient to continue theſe Powers, Some-"thing of the ſame Method had been "continued alſo." (P. 15.) By this Way of Reaſoning every Evidence of his having interpoſed

terpoſed by *Himſelf*, will be a preſumptive Proof of his continuing ſo long to interpoſe likewiſe by the *Inſtrumentality* of Human Agents; and therefore to Mr. *T*'s Queſtion, *what* the Proof of ſuch a Miracle wrought immediately by Heaven *would prove againſt the Free-Inquiry?* I anſwer directly, it will prove, againſt that Author's Opinion, that Chriſtianity was not yet ſo well eſtabliſhed, as to be left to make its Way merely by its own Reaſonableneſs; and will obviate every other Objection againſt the *Neceſſity*, or the *Expediency* of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers.

Mr. *T*. after a Recapitulation, which I ſhall readily leave to the Peruſal and Judgment of the Reader, proceeds to what I had farther obſerved on the ſuppoſed *Silence* of the Apoſtolical Writers as to this Point. Dr. *M*. thought that their not inſiſting upon miraculous Endowments was a preſumptive Argument that They were not favoured with them; I obſerved on the other Hand, that there were not only good Reaſons to be aſſigned, why They might not mention them in thoſe epiſtolary Writings, tho' They were endowed with them; but that this very Circumſtance was a ſtrong Preſumption, that theſe miraculous Gifts were continued to them; otherwiſe their *Silence* on ſo important an Alteration in their

Circumſtances, as the Withdrawing of thoſe Gifts would occaſion, was not to be accounted for. I added the Reaſons, that our Saviour's Promiſe was not limited in any ſuch Manner as to confine it to the Perſons or Times of the Apoſtles; that in Fact theſe ſupernatural Gifts were plentifully beſtowed on common Believers, juſt before *they* wrote; that the *Occaſion* and even *Neceſſity* for them *continued* or rather *encreaſed* under the Perſecutions ariſing in the next Age; that it was natural for Them in the ſame Circumſtances to expect the ſame Aſſiſtance, and that They could not well have avoided taking Notice of the great Difference in this Reſpect, if They had been diſappointed in their Expectations; eſpecially as They were writing in a *practical* Manner to Thoſe, who were now to endure greater Hardſhips with the Proſpect of leſs Supports. Mr. *T*'s Reply is, that "this "Argument ſeems to Him to fail in its "firſt Principle; He thinks I have not "made it ſufficiently appear, that They "muſt have entertained any ſuch Expec-"tation; nor can He conſider any Thing "that is ſaid either by Chriſt or his Apoſ-"tles, as ſufficient to ground ſuch a Con-"jecture upon." (P. 35.) But I ſuppoſe that the Reader expected his *Argument*, and not

not this *Opinion*, otherwiſe according to this Method of anſwering, a poſitive Aſſertion that any Book is nothing to the Purpoſe, may be called a *Reply*. It became Mr. *T.* in this Place to ſhew, either that the *Words* of our Saviour's Promiſe *limited* the Expectation of theſe extraordinary Gifts to the Times of the Apoſtles, or that the *Occaſion* for ſuch Expectation *ceaſed*, and that the Circumſtances of their immediate Succeſſors being *different* did of Courſe limit the Promiſe, and cut off all Proſpect of ſupernatural Aſſiſtance. If any ſuch Alteration to their Advantage could be proved, ſo as to ſuperſede the Uſe of Miracles, the Intent of the Promiſe might well be thought to be already fulfilled, and that it was confined by the Uſe and Deſign, tho' not by the Phraſe of it. But the Caſe in Fact was directly otherwiſe. Perſecutions grew more *frequent*, and more *ſevere*, and the Aſſiſtance of theſe ſupernatural Gifts was at leaſt as much wanted, when theſe Writers penned their Epiſtles, as when St. *Paul* wrote his. They had ſeen the Completion of our Saviour's Promiſe in all the ſeveral Inſtances referred to it, and They had ſeen the Uſe and Effect of it, in the Support of Believers, and the Converſion of ſeveral of their Adverſaries. They ſaw and experienced that the ſame

Reaſons ſtill ſubſiſted for their Continuance, and therefore They could not but expect them in that Situation, till the *Event* proved otherwiſe, and ſome Interruption of them at leaſt prevented the Hopes of Their Revival. And therefore tho' Mr. *T.* ſays, "He "does not ſee but We have as good a "Pretence to infer from hence a Right to "theſe Powers, as they had," Others, I preſume, will think theſe Conſiderations of ſome Weight; and that tho' We, who have not ſuch Occaſion for ſupernatural Aſſiſtance, and who live after a long Interval in which We know it has been withdrawn, cannot claim it from our Saviour's general Promiſe; yet that thoſe Apoſtolical Writers, who were in the very ſame Situation with Thoſe to whom the Promiſe was firſt made, and who had ſeen them laſt down to their own Times, could not but expect the Continuance of them in their Days. If they really continued, They had no particular Occaſion to take Notice of it in their practical Writings; but if they ceaſed, Thoſe Writers had an eſpecial Call to mention ſuch an eminent Failure of their Hopes, and to introduce it as an Argument, why They ſhould lay ſtill more Streſs on their only remaining Ornaments and Recommendations, their Piety and Virtue.

But Mr. *T.* ſays, "I look upon it, that "the Event of their *Ceaſing* might be no "more extraordinary to Them, than it "muſt be thought to appear to Thoſe, who "lived at the Time that they actually did "ceaſe, whenever that was, and who yet "have not expreſſed any particular Surpriſe "at it." (*ibid.*) As it happens this Gentleman is miſtaken both in the *Reaſon* and the *Fact*. The Event of the Ceaſing of Miraculous Gifts muſt have been much more extraordinary and ſurpriſing, if it happened, whilſt the ſame, or greater Perſecutions raged, as when they were firſt given, than if they ceaſed after the Ceaſing of all Perſecutions, when Chriſtianity was protected and encouraged by the Civil Power. If this Event happened, as it is ſuppoſed to do, at this Period, then Wiſe Men might ſee the *Deſign* of this Diſpenſation in the *Date* of it, and might diſcern the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of Providence in continuing them ſo long as the Powers of the Earth continued to oppoſe the bleſſed Goſpel, and in withdrawing them, when *Human Supports* might well ſeem ſufficient. Yet it appears, that the *Inattentive* ſometimes ſtood in Need to be reminded of this plain Diſtinction, and their Surprize, both conceived and expreſſed, at the Ceaſing of theſe

miraculous Powers in the Church, after ſo long an Enjoyment of them, gave Occaſion to ſeveral Writers to treat of this Subject, and to point to the Difference already taken Notice of, amongſt ſome other Reaſons which They aſſign for this Event.

I will paſs over Mr. *T*'s Triumph and Congratulations to Himſelf on what He has performed on this Head, and paſs on to what He next ſeemed to intend as an Argument. Tho' Dr. *M.* had Himſelf ranked *Viſions* and *Prophetical Gifts* amongſt the other *ſupernatural* Powers, which He propoſed to ſhew had ceaſed in the Church with the Apoſtles, yet being well aware what Evidence might be brought againſt Him on this Point, He endeavours to obviate it by ſaying, that "if it ſhould appear probable "to Any that They were favoured on ſome "Occaſions with extraordinary Illuminati-"ons, Viſions, or Divine Impreſſions, yet "that Gifts of this Sort were merely *perſonal*, "granted for their particular Comfort, and "reaching no farther than Themſelves." I obſerved that ſuch an Evaſion was as applicable to any other Kind of Endowments as theſe, and was indeed of Force in None; for that all ſuch Gifts were both Acts of *Mercy*, and Arguments of *Authority*, and therefore unleſs He could diſprove the Hiſtorical Account

of ſuch ſupernatural Illuminations, Theſe would be of Force againſt his Main Queſtion. I inſtanced in the Hiſtory of the Predictions of St. *Ignatius* and *Polycarp*, as cited by Archbiſhop *Wake*, and obſerved that if it be *real*, (plainly referring to Dr. *M's* own Intimation, that there were ſome ſuch Inſtances, and that it might appear probable to Some Perſons, that there were extraordinary Illuminations, Viſions, and Divine Impreſſions continued in the Church) then They might be both a Support to them, and an Evidence to Others of the Truth of what They taught. As He had not diſproved, as He ſeemed to admit, that ſuch an Hiſtory might probably be thought real, I obſerved that if it was, his other Evaſion would be of no Service; and thus I argued on a Conceſſion, which Truth had almoſt extorted from Him involuntarily; and the Manner in which I expreſſed Myſelf, was not owing, as Mr. *T.* interprets it, to my *Diffidence* of the Truth of thoſe Facts, but to the *Manner* in which Dr. *M.* Himſelf has ſtated the Caſe; as the leaſt attentive Reader could not but have obſerved.

As to the extraordinary Illuminations granted to *Ignatius*, the Archbiſhop referred to two Proofs of it, his Foreſight of the Diviſions, which actually happened amongſt the

the *Philadelphians*, to whom He had given Notice of, and Caution againſt them; and his immediate Knowledge, *by the Spirit*, of thoſe Strangers, who came to meet Him juſt before his Martyrdom. Mr. *T.* only obſerves, that "if I, or any other Perſon "will put it paſt Doubt that theſe Words, "*Do Nothing without your Biſhop*, were "dictated to *Ignatius* by the Spirit of God, "it will be doing a ſignal Piece of Ser-"vice in the Controverſy between Us and "the Preſbyterians." (P. 37.) This again is moſt unaccountably confuſed and foreign to the Point. The *Prediction* which the Archbiſhop referred to in this Paſſage, had Nothing to do with the Form of Church Government eſtabliſhed amongſt them, but to the Diviſions and Confuſions, which were coming on amongſt them. They did not want a *Prophecy* to tell them, that *Epiſcopacy* was the right Inſtitution, which They knew was already ſettled and univerſally ſubmitted to; but having a Fore-Knowledge, that Diſſentions and Troubles were coming on, the natural Dictate of the Spirit, without an immediate Revelation on the Occaſion, would be this, as repreſented by *Ignatius*; "Do Nothing without "your Biſhop: Keep your Bodies as the "Temples of God: Love Unity: Flee Di-

"viſions:

"viſions: Be ye Followers of Chriſt, as He "was of the Father." This was not the Sentence referred to by the Archbiſhop as the Proof of an extraordinary Illumination, but the *Foreſight* of the Event, which made this Advice neceſſary, was the Point, which ſhewed ſome higher Aſſiſtance. The Advice itſelf was no more than might be collected from the Dictate of the Spirit, as recorded in the ſacred Writings, and explained by the univerſal Eſtabliſhment of Epiſcopacy in all Places; and ſo I find it underſtood by thoſe, who have commented upon this Paſſage. It does by no Means follow, that becauſe any Perſon was favoured with a Prophetical Impulſe in *one* Inſtance, that therefore He had the ſame extraordinary Aſſiſtance in *every Thing*, or that He could not ſpeak a Word on ſuch an Occaſion, but by immediate Inſpiration. St. *Paul* diſtinguiſhes very often, in his Epiſtles, betwixt direct Suggeſtions of the Holy Spirit, and thoſe Counſels which proceed from ſtated Precepts, under the common habitual Influences of the ſame Divine Guide, and takes Care that They ſhould not miſtake every *prudential* Rule which He gave them, for the *immediate* Dictate of *Inſpiration*. In like Manner the Primitive Writers, under a due Senſe of the Neceſſity of

Divine

Divine Grace to help them, frequently make Mention of the Aſſiſtance and Guidance of the Holy Spirit, where They did not mean to ſpeak of *ſupernatural* Aſſiſtance, or extraordinary Illuminations. Thus *Ignatius* may very reaſonably be underſtood to repreſent the ſcriptural Holy Advice, which He gave them, as the *Dictate of the Spirit*, which will prove a ſufficient Teſtimony to the Honour and Authority of *Epiſcopacy*, and will ſhew it to be, as I am firmly perſwaded it is, of *Apoſtolical*, if not ſtrictly of *Divine* Inſtitution. If it be ſtill thought, that the Original Phraſe muſt be underſtood of an *immediate Inſpiration*, I ſee no Abſurdity in the Conſequence, nor any Thing, in the Advice given, unworthy of ſuch a Divine Author.

"As to *Polycarp*'s foretelling his Death," Mr. *T.* ſays, that Dr. *M.* very juſtly obſerves, "that the Foreſight of ſuch an Event, in "the Time of cruel Perſecution, might be "no Proof of a Prophetick Spirit." But the *Time* at which He delivered this Prediction, the *Manner* in which He ſpake of it to Thoſe about Him, the particular *Kind* of Death, which he deſcribed, and the Completion of it, ſhew that this Foreſight could not be the Effect of *common Prudence* from the Circumſtances which He was in, as Dr.

M.

M. repreſents it. He interrupted his Devotions at ſuch a ſolemn Seaſon to mention it as ſomething *extraordinary*, and no Reaſon can be given, why from his Situation He ſhould think particularly of being *burnt alive*, rather than of being *thrown to the Beaſts*; or why He ſhould fix on any One *Kind* of Death, and leave it in the Power of Events to hurt his Reputation, if his Conjecture was only founded on the Probability of his loſing his Life in ſo cruel a Perſecution. The farther Teſtimony of the Writers of this Circular Letter, that he was a "truly Apoſtolical and Prophetical Teacher, "and that Every Word that went out of "his Mouth either had then been already "fulfilled, or would in its due Time be "accompliſhed," is a Confirmation of this particular Prophecy; and tho' Mr. *T.* here again introduces the old Objection, without ſtrengthening it, that "the whole Account "of the Viſion ſtands upon the ſame Foot-"ing with that of the Pigeon," yet others will probably be ſatisfied by this Time, that This is a *Miſrepreſentation*, and that theſe two Circumſtances are ſupported by very different Authorities.

I will follow Mr. *T*'s Example in this Place, to avoid Repetition, and paſs over Dr. *M*'s Remark on the Improbability of the

Revival of theſe Gifts, after they are ſuppoſed to have ceaſed; leaving the Proof of that Suppoſition, and the Argument concerning the *Silence* of the Apoſtolical Writers, to depend on what has been already offered. Dr. *M*'s next Remark was on the *Manner* of exerting theſe miraculous Gifts, which He thought the more ſuſpicious in the Days after the Apoſtles, becauſe then the Workers of them called on Others to come, and ſee, and examine them, which was a more *oſtentatious* Method than Any that the Apoſtles uſed. I obſerved in Anſwer, that it was ſtrange to interpret an Offer of publick Examination to be an Air of Impoſture. A Readineſs and Deſire that All ſhould look into the Foundations of any Pretenſions, is a *preſumptive* Argument of their Truth, that they will indeed bear Examination; and the Want of this is as readily preſumed to be owing to a Conſciouſneſs that they will not ſtand the Teſt, as We argue in the Caſe of the Church of *Rome*. I obſerved farther, that if the Difference mentioned between the Miracles of the Apoſtles, and of their Succeſſors, had lain directly otherwiſe, Dr. *M*. would have known how to have turned that Conſideration to the Service of his own Cauſe. Mr. *T*. has here again made a Shift to miſunderſtand

me,

me, (which was, I think, no eaſy Matter) and has intimated, as if I thought that Dr. *M.* would upon that State of the Caſe have objected to the Apoſtles Themſelves, Whereas that Queſtion was out of my Thoughts at that Time. Dr. *M.* I knew, was ſo good a Maſter of Argument, as not to have omitted to make the beſt of ſo material a Circumſtance in his Favour, as that State of the Caſe would have afforded Him. He who profeſſes to believe the Miracles of the Apoſtles, and to reject thoſe of their Succeſſors, would not have failed to have triumphed in this Difference between them; if the former had, before they worked their Miracles, called on their Enemies and Perſecutors to come and examine them, and the latter had only recorded them, *after* the Performance of them, without ſuch previous Challenge and Invitation. "How plauſi-"bly," ſaid I, "would this Gentleman "have declaimed upon this Repreſentation?" My Meaning plainly was, that He would in that Caſe have urged, that the Succeſſors not following ſuch a Pattern betrayed a Conſciouſneſs that They had not the ſame real Power; and then I doubt not but He would have enlarged on the Importance, not only of *admitting*, but of *inviting* Enquiries and Examinations, where Truth and Evidence

can

can ſupport the Cauſe. Then He would, with the Reſt of Mankind, have thought it of great Weight, in Reſpect of the Evidence, that ſuch Notice ſhould be given beforehand, as might prepare all Men thoroughly to examine and ſift the Cauſe, and thereby prevent any Evaſions afterwards. Mr. *T.* is pleaſed here to ſay, that "I have entirely "miſapprehended the Grounds of the Fact "the Dr. has referred to, which He now "repreſents to be, as if the Objection was, "that they are not punctually recorded." This Circumſtance is indeed *incidentally* mentioned, but the plain View of the Dr's Exception in this Place was, the *oſtentatious* Method, as He eſteems it, of proclaiming their Powers, and offering to exert them, whenever They ſhould be called on. Whether Mr. *T.* found this too hard a Point to maintain, whether He was at a Loſs for a proper *Medium*, to prove an Offer of Examination to be a Mark of Impoſture, and therefore choſe to wave it, and to carry our View to another Point, I ſhall leave the attentive Reader to determine. The Article of punctually recording the Goſpel-Miracles has been already mentioned, and is allowed to be a Circumſtance of peculiar Advantage to their Credibility, and had they been wrought after ſuch previous Challenges

and Invitations, and the ſucceeding ones had been more private and concealed, this would juſtly have been eſteemed another peculiar Advantage in their Favour. But becauſe this Circumſtance happened to lie on the Side of After-Ages, who having ſeen the Evaſions of the Evidence of former Miracles, and being willing to prevent them, did therefore call on the Magiſtrates and People, being then their Enemies, to come and ſee, and bear Witneſs to their ſupernatural Works, therefore This was in ſome Method or other to be evaded, and even Dr. *M's* Eloquence proved unequal to the arduous Taſk. For We deſire to lay aſide the Pomp of Words, and demand a plain Reaſon, why a Challenge to Adverſaries to look into their Claim of ſupernatural Gifts ſhould be thought a Preſumption againſt them. Why, ſays Mr. *T.* "Miracles ſpeak for Themſelves; They need no round-about-Way "of recommending them; They go immediately to the Senſes of Mankind without "any formal Proceſs of Words." (P. 41, 42.) But what avails all this to Thoſe, who are not *Witneſſes* to thoſe Miracles? The Intent of their publick Calls to their Perſecutors to ſee their mighty Works, was to gain the Opportunity of working them in their Preſence. It was eaſy to deſpiſe *Reports*, and

to evade even thoſe, which were well-atteſted, upon the general Preſumptions which ingenious Men can find out againſt the Credibility of ſupernatural Interpoſitions; but when They were told, that the Miracles, which They had heard of, ſhould readily be repeated before Themſelves, This was a proper Call on their Attention, and was more likely to end in their Conviction, if ſuch Claims were well founded; or in the Confuſion of the Claimants, if they were not. On this Account I obſerved, that "the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles often found it "more convincing to *lay Claim* to Divine "Aſſiſtance, and then to work their Miracles in Confirmation of their Claim." Upon which Mr. *T.* rejoins, "more convincing "than what pray? What is the other "Branch of the Compariſon? More convincing than the Method made Uſe of by "our Saviour and his Apoſtles? This, if you "pleaſe, may be deemed Harangue and "Declamation, to ſay no worſe of it." And then goes on to talk about God Almighty's changing his Method of Proceeding; which has as much Relation to any other Part of my Book, or to any other Book, as to this Paſſage.

I would obſerve in the firſt Place, that to render this Compariſon invidious, Mr. *T.* has

has been pleaſed to introduce the Mention of the Method made Uſe of by our Saviour, of which I had not ſaid or intimated the leaſt Thought. Indeed our Bleſſed Lord, in the moſt eminent of his Miracles, that of his own *Reſurrection*, made Uſe of the very Method that We are ſpeaking of, as practiſed by the Succeſſors of the Apoſtles. He gave publick Notice of it before-hand, that the Adverſaries of his Perſon and Cauſe might look into the Truth of it, and might endeavour, if they could, to prevent it. His Predictions of this were ſo clear and frequent, that his Enemies underſtood and remembered it, and took effectual Care not to be impoſed upon in this Article. The Event ſhewed the Reaſon of this previous Mention and Publication of it, as contributing to the clearer Eſtabliſhment of the Evidence and Belief of this glorious Article. For tho' the After-Atteſtation of our Saviour's Reſurrection by his Diſciples would have been concluſive and ſatisfactory, yet were not all Evaſions more effectually cut off by this early Declaration of it to his Adverſaries, their careful Endeavours to prevent any Fraud or Impoſture in this Affair, and the greater Security thence ariſing of the Reality of that glorious Event? If theſe Gentlemen will apply their Reaſonings concerning Miracles

ſpeaking for themſelves, &c. without previous Declarations of them; to this Inſtance, it might well "be deemed Harangue and Declamation, to ſay no worſe of it;" and by the Impropriety and Abſurdity of it in this Inſtance, it may well appear to be of no Force, nay to be of ſome Advantage, where the *Reality* of the Fact appears by the *Event* to have been well ſupported. Why the Apoſtles did not follow this Pattern, and declare before-hand what Miracles They were ready to perform, why our Bleſſed Saviour did not, in other Inſtances, challenge them to ſee what *ſupernatural* Power He was about to exert, may reaſonably be preſumed to be, becauſe the Caſes and Perſons with whom They had then to do, did not require it. The People, amongſt whom They reſided, had frequent Occaſion of ſeeing their miraculous Works, and attended them with that Expectation. Theſe needed no ſuch publick Call, and the Apoſtles wrote no Apologies to Emperors, or Rulers at a Diſtance from them, where ſuch Claims and Challenges might properly have been expected. But their Succeſſors had great Occaſion to make ſuch Claim *publick*, that the Heathen Governors, who now thought this growing Religion worthy their Notice and Cenſure, and began to aim at ſuppreſſing it by Perſecution,

ſecution, might be informed what ſure Credentials They had to ſhew for their Commiſſion, and might be aſſured that They were ready to make good in their Preſence ſuch Claims to miraculous Powers, as muſt be owned to be given by God. In the Writings of Perſons *ſo circumſtanced*, We might well expect to find ſuch Pretenſions *publickly* avowed, and here We do find them; and What Kind of Objection is it to Them, that their Predeceſſors, who were *differently* ſituated, worked their Miracles without exhibiting in Writing a prefaratory Claim to them? St. *Paul* in thoſe Epiſtles, wherein He ſpeaks of theſe miraculous Powers, ſpeaks of the *prudent* Uſe of them, and directs that theſe, as well as other Talents, ſhould be ſo uſed, as might be moſt edifying to the Church. They followed the Direction, and This was the Fact that I was ſpeaking of, that as Times and Circumſtances varied, They conformed to their Situation, and ſtill uſed their miraculous Gifts in the Method that might be moſt convincing to Thoſe whom They were concerned with. If They thought that the Miracles of their Predeceſſors had not *reached the Ears* of the Rulers, or were eſteemed by them as *uncertain* Reports, what properer Method could They take, than to publiſh an open and free Ac-

count of their own ſupernatural Endowments, and that They were both able and willing to repeat the ſame for the Satisfaction of the Greateſt or the Leaſt that would attend them? If They found them evading the Force of ſuch former Miracles by thoſe Objections, which We ſometimes read of, as that they were *done in private*, and *ſhunned the Light*, how could They more effectually obviate ſuch Cavils, than by proclaiming publickly their miraculous Gifts, "which they were ready to exhibit before "the Eyes of their Oppoſers, on all Occa-"ſions, at any Warning, and in all Places "whenever They thought fit?" In this Caſe there was no *Alteration* in the Scheme and Method of Providence, as Mr. *T.* repreſents it, but there was a wiſe and prudent Accommodation of theſe Gifts by Thoſe, who were entruſted with them, ſo as to render them moſt *effectual* to the Propagation and Support of Chriſtianity. Mr. *T.* adds, "Upon Mr. *D*'s Repreſentation it was neceſſary "to *claim* the Power, in order to convince "the World They really poſſeſſed it; "whereas, ſays He, in my humble Con-"ception, Whoever uſes the Power, makes "a previous verbal Claim to it altogether un-"neceſſary." (P. 42.) Mr. *D*'s Repreſentation not only did not imply the Charge laid

to

to it, but expreſly excluded it; for I had ſaid in theſe plain and determinate Words, "Either Method would be ſufficient for "the Satisfaction of a reaſonable Inquirer, "but certainly the latter was leſs liable to "Evaſion:" and I ſee no Reaſon to alter my Opinion in this Point.

Mr. *T.* proceeds next to ſubjoin his Sentiments upon another Point, where his Obſervations, as far as they are true, are of more Weight againſt Dr. *M.* than againſt me. The Dr. had urged that "the Chriſtians "of thoſe Times in the Performance of "their Miracles were always charged with "Fraud and Impoſture by their Adverſa-"ries." This I obſerved was very *conſiſtent* in thoſe Adverſaries, who extended the Objection even to the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles; but that the *Charge* of Impoſture by *Enemies* would ſcarce be thought to prove the *Reality* of Impoſture. Mr. *T.* thinks that in this Caſe it may, and inſiſts on the great Characters of the Objectors, who could not, in his Opinion, be ſo ſtupid, and ſenſeleſs, and ſhameleſs, as to put the Iſſue of their Cauſe upon the Truth or Falſehood of an Event that was ſo eaſily to be decided againſt them. As to the *Reaſonableneſs* of the Conduct of obſtinate Unbelievers, ancient or modern, it is more than I

ſhall undertake at preſent to account for; We have ſeen them in all Ages reſiſt Evidence, which was next to irreſiſtible, and I cannot attempt to prove, that They acted reaſonably herein, becauſe I am much otherwiſe perſuaded. But I apprehend that the Argument here made Uſe of, will hold with much greater Force on the other Side. The Single Point agreed on betwixt Dr. *M.* and his Advocates, and Thoſe who have wrote againſt Him, is that ſuch Pretenſions were made by the Primitive Chriſtians openly and univerſally, at all Times, and before all Perſons. Now could *Theſe* have acted ſo ſtupid, ſenſeleſs, and ſhameleſs a Part, as to put the Iſſue of their Cauſe upon an Event, that was ſo eaſily to be decided againſt them? The Point, as Mr. *T.* obſerves, might be demonſtrated on the Evidence of their own Senſes: Whether it was true or falſe, it might be brought to a clear and ſpeedy Concluſion; and ſo far the Friends and Enemies of the Chriſtians Cauſe were on a Level, and this Argument ſeems equally favourable to both Parties.

To balance therefore and decide the Queſtion, We muſt enquire farther, on which Side the greater Prejudices and Intereſt lay, and what was the Event of this Competition betwixt ſuch Claimants and their Opponents.

ponents. *Folly and Effrontery*---We will allow there muſt be ſomewhere, and the Circumſtances of the Caſe will ſufficiently ſhew where they are chargeable. The *Heathen Philoſophers* had all the Prepoſſeſſions of Education, and all the Pride and Eſteem acquired by their Science, beſides the common Temptations of the Power, and Profit, and Honour of the World, to influence them againſt the Pretenſions of Thoſe who laid Claim to Miraculous Powers. The Principal of theſe *Chriſtian Claimants* had been in the very ſame Situation Themſelves, had overcome theſe Prejudices thro' the mere Love of Truth and Force of Evidence, and had undertaken a new Religion upon Conviction, which promiſed them Nothing but Perſecutions, and Tortures, and Death. They had no worldly Intereſt to ſerve by making this Claim, but They might have made very great Advantage by renouncing it, by going over to their Adverſaries and detecting the Fraud of their Brethren. They became *Converts* to the Goſpel, and challenged the Power of working Miracles in their *Maſter's Name*, when that *Name* was made a Term of Reproach, and They could expect to profeſs it on no other Condition, than that of ſacrificing every Comfort in Life, and moſt probably their Life itſelf, in

his

his Service. And is it credible, that They could thus give up every reaſonable and deſirable Proſpect both in this World, and in the next, to maintain what They knew to be a groſs Fraud and Impoſture? This then is *one* material *Difference* between Thoſe, who *rejected*, and Thoſe who *maintained* theſe Pretenſions, that the Former had great *Prepoſſeſſions* and *Intereſts* to blind their Eyes againſt the Evidence offered; the Latter had no Reaſon in the World to tempt them to Diſguiſe and Falſification, but it would have anſwered the great Points of Security and Proſperity, both here and hereafter, to have owned the Truth, and not to have charged their Conſciences with ſo heavy a Guilt, as that of making Pretenſions to extraordinary Gifts from Heaven, which They knew They were not favoured with.

Again, The *Event* of this Diſpute may well be thought to depend on the *Evidence* of it. The Heathens charged the Chriſtians with *Fraud* and *Impoſture*, and if They could have made good the Charge, would infallibly have prevented their Progreſs; for They had already every other Diſcouragement againſt them, and had Nothing to be hoped for, but from the *Evidence* which They offered. Yet in this Situation *Hea-*

theniſm daily decayed, and the *Goſpel* gained Ground; The Profeſſors of the Former fell into that Neglect and Contempt which Perſons uſually do, who advance Charges that They cannot make good; whilſt the Latter had all the Succeſs that could be expected from the cleareſt Verification of their Pretenſions. And This appears to be *another* Circumſtance of Weight to ſhew on which Side the *Folly and Effrontery* were to be charged.

If it be thought, that the *Succeſs* of the Goſpel was owing to *other* Evidence, as particularly to the Teſtimony concerning thoſe real Miracles, which were wrought by *Chriſt* and *his Apoſtles*, I ſhall obſerve with Mr. *T.* that there was more Room to cavil at ſuch Teſtimony, with Reſpect to the Tranſactions of a *paſt* Age, than there could be with Reſpect to Thoſe Miracles, which they had ſuch Opportunities of being *Eye-Witneſſes* of Themſelves. Had the ſucceeding Chriſtians claimed the Continuance of theſe miraculous Gifts without Foundation, They could not have done a greater Prejudice to the Evidence ariſing from the real Miracles of their Predeceſſors; for Thoſe Adverſaries, who could have *diſproved* the *latter*, which were offered in the ſame Cauſe, would have *preſumed* the

ſame

ſame of the *former*, and thought them unworthy of their Notice.

A late learned Writer has given this Solution to the Difficulty raiſed by Mr. *T.* and has offered this as the *Hypotheſis*, why the Wiſer Heathens rejected the Account of *all* Miracles wrought as well by the earlieſt as the later Chriſtians, namely, becauſe They looked on all Miracles as *incredible*, as *Frauds of Courſe*, and therefore did not think that any Pretenſions whatſoever deſerved the leaſt Attention. If this were the Caſe, Mr. *T.* may ſee a Reaſon, why Perſons of the higheſt Characters among them, might lay the Charge of Fraud upon the Chriſtians, without being guilty of ſuch *egregious Folly* as He ſpeaks of. For according to this Repreſentation, They did not "put the Iſſue "of their Cauſe upon the Truth or Falſhood "of an Event that was ſo eaſily to be de-"cided againſt them," but They *refuſed to join Iſſue* at all upon this Point. They rejected their Miracles, and charged them with Fraud, not thro' the Objection of any *particular Inſufficiency* in their Evidence, but thro' this Opinion, that *no Evidence* whatſoever could prove a Miracle. For my own Part I do not think that any ſuch *general* Account can be given of all the Philoſophers. They differed like other Perſons, and oppoſed

the

the Miracles wrought in Favour of the Goſpel, Some on one Principle and Some on Another. Some thought *no Miracles* could be proved at all; Others thought that no Miracles could prove ſuch *Doctrines* as thoſe of the *Incarnation* and *Croſs*; and therefore agreed in rejecting the Pretenſions of the Chriſtians, tho' on very *different* Grounds. Very probably the forementioned Repreſentation may hold with Reſpect to *many*, or perhaps the *greater Part* of the Philoſophers; but I think there is plain Evidence, from the Accounts given by the Primitive Chriſtians of the Objections made againſt them, that it did not hold with Reſpect to *All*. But whether They thought *Miracles* abſolutely *incredible*, or not, yet if, whilſt They had the Power and Authority on their Side, They could have diſproved the Pretenſions of Thoſe, who had offered them in *their Days*, they would of Courſe have rejected the Accounts of the *former* Times, and ſpared Themſelves the Trouble of looking into them at all. The Succeſs therefore of Chriſtianity, whilſt theſe Pretenſions continued, and whilſt its Profeſſors lay under ſo many other Diſadvantages, which Nothing but clear Evidence could have overcome, is with me a ſtrong Argument, that they were proved to be *real* to Thoſe, who, in

Oppoſition

Oppoſition to their Intereſt, became Converts to them.

"But after all," ſays Mr. *T.* "is it un-"deniably certain, that theſe Oppoſers of "Chriſtianity did charge the Miracles of "our Saviour and his Apoſtles with Fraud "and Impoſture? Is Mr. *D.* (He ſhould "have ſaid is Dr. *M.*) confident, this Queſ-"tion may not be anſwered in the Nega-"tive?" Here He has deſerted his Client, and come over to me, thro' a vehement Deſire of oppoſing me in every Thing. It is to be conſidered then, that tho' theſe Gentlemen have made the Diſtinction, and laid great Streſs on it, between the Miracles wrought by our Saviour and his Apoſtles, and thoſe which were wrought by their immediate Succeſſors, yet the Enemies of the Goſpel at that Time had not found out this Diſtinction, but by denying the *Miracles* of *Chriſtians*, meant to deny all that were wrought in that Cauſe; or by admitting and *evading* them, meant to extend that *Evaſion* to *preſent* as well as *former* Pretenſions. Whatever Inſtances therefore may be offered of their attempting to account for ſuch Miracles by Art, Magick, and the like, are ſo many Arguments againſt Dr. *M.* that the Objectors did not *always* charge them with *Fraud* and *Impoſture*, as He has aſſerted.

To

To this Purpoſe I obſerved, that tho' Thoſe, who would not own the Doctrines of Chriſtianity, muſt have been *ſelf-condemned*, if They had not denied the Miracles, (plainly meaning unleſs They had ſome other Evaſion) yet that "They did not think fit to truſt "their Cauſe on this Point: For tho' They "ſometimes threw in ſuch Hints as theſe "yet that at other Times They ſhifted the "Objection, and choſe rather to ſuppoſe, "that their Miracles were wrought by the "Aſſiſtance of *Demons*." To this Mr. *T.* ſays, "If Mr. *D.* had made it fairly ap"pear, that the Perſons We are ſpeaking of, "imputed the Miracles that were pretend"ed to be wrought in their own Times "to any ſuch Power, This indeed would "have been ſomething to his Purpoſe; and "I ſhould have been obliged to Him for the "Information, but the Point is only in"timated, and not one Word ſaid in Proof "of it." (P. 45.) As I was writing againſt Dr. *M.* whoſe intimate Acquaintance with the Primitive Writers could not fail of furniſhing Him with many Proofs of it, I thought it proper to *remind* Him of this Circumſtance, without thinking it neceſſary to point to all the Inſtances of it; not foreſeeing that this would be made an Objection by One, who was unacquainted with them.

Very

Very expreſs is that almoſt in the Entrance of *Origen*'s Diſcourſe againſt *Celſus*: Μετὰ ταῦτα ἀκόλουθα ποιῶν κινεῖται ὁ Κέλσος φησὶ, δαιμόνων τινῶν ὀνόμασι καὶ κατακλήσεσι δοκεῖν ἰσχύειν χρίστιανούς· ὡς οἶμαι, ἀνισοῦμεν τὰ περὶ τῶν κατεπαδόντων τοὺς δαίμονας καὶ ἐξιλαυνόντων. (Orig. cont. *Celſ.* P. 324. Ben. Ed.) *Euſebius*'s Citation from *Porphyry* amounts to a full Teſtimony of the ſame, that Chriſtians had a Power over Evil Spirits. Περὶ δὲ τοῦ μηκέτι δύνασθαι τὶ καὶ ἰσχύειν τοὺς φαύλους δαίμονας, μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν εἰς ἀνθρώπους πάροδον, καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ καθ' ἡμᾶς τῶν δαιμόνων προηγορος ἐν τῇ καθ' ἡμῶν συσκευῇ τοῦτόν πως λέγων μαρτυρεῖ τὸν τρόπον· Νυνὶ δὲ θαυμάζουσιν, εἰ τοσούτων ἐτῶν κατείληφε τὴν πόλιν ἡ νόσος, Ἀσκληπιοῦ μὲν ἐπιδημίας καὶ τῶν ἄλλων θεῶν μηκέτ' οὔσης· Ἰησοῦ γὰρ τιμωμένου, ὀλίγαις τισὶ θεῶν δημοσίας ὠφελείας ἤνθετο. (*Euſeb.* Præp. Evang. Lib. V. C. 1. P. 181. Par. Ed. 1628.) There are other Evidences of this not a few, but they are ſo well collected, and the Enforcement of them is ſo well expreſſed by Mr. *Brooke*, that I ſhall refer Mr. *T.* to Him for full Inſtruction and Satisfaction. (See *Brooke*'s Examin. P. 175, &c.) There are many Obſervations and Arguments to the ſame Purpoſe in my Father's Diſſert. *Cyprian.* XII. § 45, &c.

The

The ſecond Head of Dr. *M*'s Enquiry related to the Perſons endued with theſe extraordinary Gifts, whom He would repreſent to be not the Rulers and Governors of the Church, but the Loweſt of the People; and He cites ſome Paſſages, wherein They ſpeak of ſome of the Meaneſt Diſciples, as poſſeſſed of this Gift. The ready Anſwer to this is, that They never *exclude Themſelves*, or *confine* theſe ſupernatural Endowments to thoſe *inconſiderable Perſons*, but that their Argument *implied* their own Enjoyment of theſe Gifts, and was properly illuſtrated in thoſe Inſtances, where there could be the leaſt Suſpicion of Art; and where the mighty Power of God ſhone the moſt illuſtriouſly thro' the Meanneſs of the Inſtruments. Mr. *T.* has allowed, that Dr. *M*'s Attempt of ſhewing that Some of the earlieſt Fathers diſclaimed theſe Gifts, is weak and inſufficient; and if They are not *expreſly excluded* by ſome ſuch plain Declaration, They muſt of Courſe be underſtood to be *included* in thoſe general Aſſertions, wherein They claimed the Continuance of theſe Miraculous Powers amongſt them, for the very Reaſon which theſe Gentlemen aſſign, namely, that it is not probable, that the common People were favoured with ſuch Privileges as were denied to their Teachers and

Rulers. When therefore Mr. *T.* repeats Dr. *M*'s Repreſentation, aſſiſted with an Abſurdity of Mr. *Whiſton*'s (who only is accountable for it) and then cries out, "is This rational? Is it credible?" We may anſwer freely, that it is not, and therefore theſe Accounts that Private People were ſometimes ſo favoured, do plainly imply that their more eminent Biſhops and Apoſtles were likewiſe ſo diſtinguiſhed. But it is very *rational* and *credible*, that They ſhould make the beſt of their Argument, ſhould lay the Streſs of it, where it was moſt inconteſtable, and ſpecify Thoſe, who by their Age, or Sex, or Education, were the remoteſt from any Suſpicion of great Attainments in Themſelves. Mr. *T.* thinks indeed, that "an inquiſitive Man cannot be ſatisfied "with this my Solution of the Matter, "That the Mention of theſe (the meaneſt "People) who were the leaſt capable of "Craft or Fraud, muſt be moſt convincing "to Gainſayers." But as This again is only his *Opinion* unſupported by *Argument*, as He has not ſhewn this Solution to be groundleſs and trifling, as I had obſerved, that in all like Caſes it is uſual to ſpecify thoſe Perſons, in whom the Force of the Argument will appear moſt to Advantage, and They have therefore done no more in

this Account, than is cuſtomary in other parallel Inſtances; the Solution as yet appears rational and pertinent, and may be ſatisfactory to the inquiſitive.

But ſays Mr. *T.* "Can Mr. *D.* produce "an Inſtance of any one Gainſayer, who "was convinced by them?" I anſwer, the Succeſs of Chriſtianity under theſe Pretenſions, as repreſented under the laſt Head, contains a Proof of Thouſands of Inſtances of Gainſayers, who were convinced by them. But the Names and Profeſſions, and Habitations of theſe Perſons, the Time, and Occaſion, and Manner of their Converſion are not particularly recorded.—They are not, but whatever was the Reaſon of their omitting to regiſter *theſe Circumſtances*, the *Fact* is equally ſure and certain, that ſuch Converts there were, that Profeſſors of the Goſpel increaſed and multiplied; when ſuch publick Claims were made and offered to Examination; when, if They had been groundleſs, They had been eaſily proved to be ſo, and ſuch Proof muſt of Courſe have put a Stop to the Progreſs of that Cauſe. We muſt argue on the Evidence as it lies before Us, and not as We may on either Side fancy that it ſhould have been, to render it more ſatisfactory. For We may with more Reaſon demand ſome Inſtance on Re-

cord, wherein this Challenge was publickly made, fairly accepted, and finally detected; or, where the *Publick Teachers* of this Religion renounced all Share in this Privilege Themſelves, and only inſiſted, that the *inferior* Part of their People, or their *Women* and *Children*, could work Miracles, tho' *They* could not. This would have been a ſtrong Preſumption againſt the Reality of ſuch Miraculous Powers remaining in any Perſons, but no ſuch Inſtances can be produced, and therefore the poſitive Proofs of their Continuance ſtand free from any ſuch Objections.

The Evidence, as it appears in *Fact*, and not in Correſpondence to our *Wiſhes*, or our *Curioſity*, ſtands thus. The Claims to miraculous Powers were made *publickly*, and Enemies were *invited* to look into them. In this Situation Chriſtianity prevailed, when a Failure in ſuch Pretenſions muſt have proved fatal. The particular Perſons who wrought them, or who examined and were convinced by them, are not ſet down in their Hiſtories, but neither is there any Record of their being publickly detected; but on the contrary thoſe Apologies, wherein theſe Challenges were ſo openly made, ſeveral Times obtained favourable Reſcripts from the Emperors: The Claims are made in ſuch gene-

ral Terms, that altho' it does not follow from Them that Every Individual Chriſtian had a Supernatural Power, yet I think it does, that no particular Order or Station was excepted, ſuppoſing always the Neceſſity of the Occaſion. The Writers in ſaying that We do ſuch Things, or ſuch Things are "done among Us, or by Us," plainly ſpeak of the *Body of True Chriſtians* in general, and cannot in common Senſe be ſuppoſed continually to *except* Themſelves. They ſometimes indeed, to obviate all Objection from any ſuppoſed Proficiency in themſelves, deſcend to ſpecify the *Meaneſt* of their Brethren, and inſiſt that They (on proper Occaſions We may be ſure) were able to do the ſame. Thus *Tertullian* in the Inſtance, which I before referred to on this Point, did not *appropriate* to Himſelf, or to Any of the Principal Governours of the Church, that ſupernatural Power which He was there ſpeaking of, but inſiſted that *Any Chriſtian whatſoever*, that ſhould be called on by the Magiſtrate, ſhould at the Peril of his Life undertake to perform the Miracle. In this Senſe I underſtand that Teſtimony of *Irenæus*, that "All, who were "truly Diſciples of *Jeſus*, worked Miracles "in his Name," and that Other, that ſuch Works were done by Exorciſts, by Ignorant

"Laymen, Women, Boys (or rather Youths) "and any ſimple (that is, any plain and "unlearned) Chriſtian whatſoever." Not that every Individual had the Power of working Miracles at large, or that any one *triſled* with ſuch ſupernatural Gifts as He had, and exerted them in any or no Occaſion; but that the *Meaneſt ſincere Chriſtian*, when He was called to a publick Conflict with *Heathens*, was, on ſuch an Exigency worthy ſuch an Interpoſition, endued with Power ſufficient in and thro' the Name of Chriſt, to work a Miracle for the Confirmation of his Brethren, and the Conviction of Adverſaries. This was ſuitable to the moſt rational Account of that *Faith of Miracles*, which is ſo often ſpoken of in the New Teſtament, the expected Completion of our *Saviour*'s Promiſe to *Thoſe who ſhould believe on his Name*, and entirely conſonant to that Diſpenſation of the ſame Gift which We find deſcribed in the Epiſtles.

For tho' Mr. *T.* is pleaſed to ſay, that no other Perſon whatſoever is ſpoken of as working Miracles juſt after the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, but the *Apoſtles* Themſelves, yet it ſeems to me very plain, that Others were thereby endued with ſupernatural Gifts; or St. *Peter* could not have repreſented this Event as a Completion of the Prophecy which

which He referred to; *This*, ſays He, *is that which was ſpoken of by the Prophet* Joel. *And it ſhall come to paſs in the laſt Days, ſaith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all Fleſh: and your Sons and your Daughters ſhall propheſy, and your young Men ſhall ſee Viſions, and your old Men ſhall dream Dreams. And on my Servants, and on my Hand-Maidens I will pour out in thoſe Days of my Spirit, and They ſhall propheſy*, Acts ii. 16, &c. Could this Propheſy have been ſaid to be fulfilled, if only the *Twelve Apoſtles* had been endued with theſe Gifts? Or is it not a plain Account, that Some of them, in different Kinds and Degrees, abounded amongſt Young and Old, and even amongſt Thoſe of different *Sexes* as well as *Ages*, juſt as they are deſcribed to do in the following Times?

Mr. *T.* ſays "He muſt confeſs, it does "appear probable from St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, "that ſome Other Perſons were inveſted "with thoſe Powers;" If This be but a bare *Probability*, I ſhall deſpair of proving any Thing *certain* merely from *his* Authority. The *Apoſtle* does not barely *hint* it, or go about to eſtabliſh it as a *diſputed* Point, but He ſpeaks of it as a well-known Fact, directs to the proper Uſe of ſuch ſupernatural Endowments, and enters into Compa-

riſon concerning the Uſe and Excellency of *theſe*, and of the *ordinary* Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit.

Upon the Whole there appears no ſuch Difference, as Dr. *M.* has repreſented, between the Diſpenſation of the Miracles as recorded in the New Teſtament, and in the Writings of the earlieſt Fathers. The former is expreſſly ſaid to be ſuch as compleated the Prophecy of *Joel*, and the latter is deſcribed to be no more: For tho' Mr. *T.* by Way of Contempt, talks, as if the Account of theſe After-Writers was, that the Power of working Miracles was commonly exerciſed by Women and Children, yet no ſuch Account can be proved from their Writings; We read in the Sacred Hiſtory of *Virgins that did prophecy*, and We read parallel Accounts in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory: But Dr. *M.* knew how to make the Diſtinction, when it would ſerve his Turn, between *Prophecy* and *Miracles*. Neither is there any ſuch Declaration, that *Children* worked Miracles, but the Paſſage ſo perverted ſpeaks plainly of *Youths*, and of Illumination by *Viſions*, in Alluſion clearly to that forementioned Prophecy.

Mr. *T.* concludes this Point with ſaying, that "it is much more conſonant to his "Notions of the Matter, to ſuppoſe that no

"Man

" Man ever did work a Miracle without " a ſpecial Commiſſion and Deſignation " from Heaven; and that it lies upon me " to ſhew the contrary." I do not well underſtand what is the Taſk here aſſigned to me. If He means, as He ſeems to do, in Support of Dr. *M*'s Opinion that " theſe " Gifts were reſtrained to a Few of the " eminent Diſciples, who were particularly " commiſſioned to propagate the Goſpel, " and preſide in the Church of Chriſt," that None were favoured with them but Thoſe of the *Clerical* Order, then I think the contrary very plain from St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, and particularly from thoſe Paſſages wherein He diſtinguiſhes, between *Teachers* and *Workers of Miracles*, and again between *Miracles* and *Governments*; Not that theſe Offices were not *ſometimes* exerciſed by the ſame Perſons, but that they were not *neceſſarily* ſo: That they were *diſtinct* in their own Nature, and diſpenſed to Believers with great *Variety*. In what other Senſe Mr. *T*. meant, that " No Man ever did " work a Miracle without a ſpecial Com- " miſſion and Deſignation from Heaven," I do not know. None of them ever pretended to work Miracles in *Virtue of their own Power and Holineſs*, but *in* and *thro'* the Name of *Chriſt*. The actual Endowment

of

of them with ſuch Power from Heaven, and a proper Call to exerciſe it on an important Occaſion, was in itſelf *Commiſſion* and *Deſignation* ſufficient. They could not work Miracles without ſuch Aſſiſtance from Heaven, and with it They certainly needed no other *particular Warrant* than a *rational* Judgment of the Weight of the Cauſe on which They undertook to do it.

Dr. *M.* under the Third Head attempted to invalidate the Credit of thoſe Fathers, on whoſe Teſtimony the main Queſtion concerning the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Church, depended. He began with *Juſtin Martyr*; and the Charge againſt Him was, that He pretended to a Knowledge of the Scriptures by *Inſpiration*, which his many wrong Expoſitions of it ſhew He had not. My Anſwer was, that He made no ſuch Pretenſions, and therefore his Want of ſuch Gift was no juſt Reflection on Him. I obſerved that it was not clear that there was any ſuch Claim at all in the Primitive Church, and that the Senſe of the *Propheſying* and the *Interpretation* of it, as ſpoken of in the New Teſtament, was leſs clear and determinate than That of any other extraordinary Gift. But ſays Mr. *T.* "in the "Extract Dr. *M.* has given Us from this "Father, I find theſe Words; Others had

"the

"the Knowledge of future Events, Viſions, "and Prophetical Sayings. Now by *Prophetical Sayings*, I ſhould naturally underſtand "the *Sayings of the Prophets*, and the *Sayings of the Prophets* I underſtand to conſtitute "a Part of the *Holy Scriptures*." I ſhould think it much more natural to underſtand it in its moſt obvious Senſe as *Predictions*, which might be, and moſt probably were, thoſe of their own Times, and not of thoſe former inſpired Writers, whoſe Works conſtitute a Part of the *Holy Scriptures*. Had This been the Meaning, it is moſt probable, that They would have uſed the very Words, of the *Sayings of the Prophets*, or in ſome more determinate Phraſe, and not have ſpoken merely of *Prophetical Sayings* in Conjunction with *Viſions*, both which were Gifts in Being in their own Days, and therefore would of Courſe be underſtood as ſpoken of them: And it appears from the New Teſtament that the Gift of *Prophecy*, and the *Interpretation* of it, were diſtinct Bleſſings. Farther, if This had been meant of interpreting the Holy Scriptures, it might reaſonably be expected, that the Mention of this Gift would have occurred in other Places, and have been ſupported by parallel corroborating Teſtimonies. But We find no ſuch Paſſages, which

which is a ſtrong Objection againſt this Interpretation of this.

However, if any ſuch Gift did then ſubſiſt, yet I inſiſted that *Juſtin Martyr* made no ſuch Claim, and to this Purpoſe I examined particularly every Paſſage, which Dr. *M.* had produced from Him, to ſupport this Charge, and ſhewed that neither the *Expreſſions* uſed, nor the *Context* would admit of any ſuch Senſe as a Claim to *Inſpiration*. I obſerved that He had not, in any one of the Places referred to, uſed the *Term*, which could be interpreted of an *extraordinary Gift*, but that He ſpoke of *the Grace of God* in the common Style of every good Chriſtian; that neither was He ſpeaking of *Himſelf* in particular, but of the Bleſſing and Privilege which *all* the Profeſſors of the Goſpel enjoyed in the Knowledge of this Revelation. What now might have been expected from the Defender of Dr. *M.* on this Head? Should He not have ſupported the Charge, have reviewed the Paſſages, and ſhewn that the *Phraſe* or the *Context* *confirmed* Dr. *M*'s Interpretation, or were *favourable* to it, or at leaſt were *capable* of it, in Oppoſition to what I had ſhewn to the contrary? But Nothing of this Kind is attempted. Mr. *T.* contents Himſelf with ſaying that "He muſt ſtill declare Himſelf

" of Opinion, that thoſe Paſſages look very " ſtrongly that Way." Are We then to be guided by *Looks* and *Appearances*, and to neglect an Examination into the cuſtomary Meaning of the *Expreſſions* uſed, the *Occaſion* on which they are introduced, and the *Connection* of the preceding and ſubſequent Paſſages? Mr. *T.* however offers a Reaſon, ſuch as it is, for his Omiſſion in this Place. Whether, ſays He, " theſe Expreſſions are " meant of ordinary or extraordinary Grace, I " ſhall not ſpend many Words in diſputing, " becauſe 'tis not at all material to the Point " in Hand." On the contrary, it was the *moſt material* Circumſtance that He had here to conſider; It was the very Point in Queſtion between Dr. *M.* and Myſelf. The Dr. charged *Juſtin Martyr* with Fraud ſufficient to diſqualify Him for a Witneſs, in that in this Inſtance He made Pretenſions to a Power which He had not, and therefore might be ſuppoſed to do the ſame in other Articles. I allowed that He had not this Gift of *interpreting the Scriptures* by *Inſpiration*; but added, that He never claimed it; and therefore his Integrity ſtands unimpeached, and He might be a very competent Witneſs in Matters wherein He ſpoke of his own Knowledge, tho' He had not other Talents, which He never pretended

to.

to. Here then We joined Iſſue, and the very thing, on which this Part of the Controverſy turned, was this; whether it appeared from the Paſſages produced, that *Juſtin claimed* the extraordinary Power of interpreting the Scriptures by *Inſpiration*. If He did, his Credit and Character muſt certainly ſuffer, and no Streſs could be laid on his Teſtimony in other Matters, who muſt have *prevaricated* wilfully in this; for We all acknowledge, that he was often miſtaken in his Expoſitions of the ſacred Writings. But if He ſpake only of the general Grace, and Favour, and Privilege, which *all* enjoyed, who were bleſſed with the Knowledge of the Goſpel, then this has no Relation to the Point in Queſtion, which concerns *ſupernatural* Gifts, and not the common Mercy of Revelation imparted to All who would receive it. The Conceſſion of ſome *Errors* in *Interpretation* hurt not his Reputation in the Capacity of a *Witneſs*, unleſs He made falſe Pretenſions to Infallibility; but no ſuch can be proved upon Him, and therefore his Reputation ſtands clear in that Article, and no Exception lies againſt Him for the Want of a Gift, which was neither claimed by Himſelf, nor appears to have been granted frequently, if at all, to any Diſciples. Nay to have rendered Dr. *M*'s

Objection

Objection againſt *Juſtin Martyr* of any Force, it ſhould have been proved, that He claimed a *conſtant* ſtanding Power of giving an *inſpired* Interpretation of Scripture, with which a wrong one given at any Time would have been inconſiſtent; or that He claimed ſuch a Power juſt at the Time when He was giving a weak and foreign Expoſition; otherwiſe according to Dr. *M*'s Suppoſition that "all ſuch ſupernatural "Gifts were imparted only at the Moment "of their Exertion, and notified by ſome "ſpecial Impulſe to the Agent," He might, as I obſerved, have been inſpired with the Senſe of *one* particular Paſſage, on ſo important an Occaſion as the Conviction of a *Jew*, and yet have been left merely to his own Reaſonings upon others.

Mr. *T.* ſays farther, "that Dr. *Grabe*, "Dr. *Cave*, and the *Editor of Juſtin*, ap-"pear not to have roſe much higher in "their Veneration for Him as an *Interpre-"ter* of Scripture, than Dr. *M.* does, and "that to the Conceſſions of theſe learned "Men Mr. *D.* is Silent." And what Occaſion could I have to be otherwiſe if I was diſpoſed to write pertinently to the Point in Hand? Neither my private Opinion, nor the Courſe of Argument that I was upon, could lead me in the leaſt to contradict

thoſe learned Men, or to juſtify every Interpretation which *Juſtin* has given of the Holy Scripture. My proper and only Buſineſs was to clear Him from the Charge of *wilful Prevarication*, which might hurt his Teſtimony in other Matters; and this I did by ſhewing that He never pretended to the *extraordinary* Gift of expounding the Scriptures by *Inſpiration*, as Dr. *M.* repreſents Him to have done. His *Miſtakes* therefore, how many ſoever they may be ſuppoſed to be, cannot prove any *Falſification*, but He may ſtill remain a good Witneſs, tho' not an infallible Interpreter of Scripture. But Mr. *T.* adds, that "the Conceſſions of theſe "learned Men muſt be looked upon as "ſubſtantial Teſtimonies againſt his being "under even the ordinary Influence of the "Holy Ghoſt in expounding the Scrip-"tures." Have They then allowed, that He has fallen into any *fundamental* Errors, deſtructive of the Chriſtian Faith or Practice, which muſt ſuppoſe Him to be deſtitute of the ordinary Influence of the Holy Ghoſt? I am not ſenſible that They have made any ſuch Conceſſions, or that They had any Reaſon to do ſo; yet Nothing leſs than ſuch Tenets, as are inconſiſtent with the Neceſſity of an *Holy Life*, or with the *eſſential* Articles of the Creed, can reaſonably be thought

thought to prove a Man thus deſerted, or deprived of the common Aſſiſtance of the Bleſſed Spirit. The ordinary Influence of the Holy Ghoſt will no more preſerve Any One from all Miſtakes in expounding the Scripture, than in his Reaſonings on other Matters; but whilſt Fundamentals are preſerved, I hope We are All under the ordinary Influence of that Bleſſed Spirit, tho' there are material Controverſies between Us, and conſequently very conſiderable Miſtakes on One Side or the Other. If Any, if Many Errors would prove the Conſequence here urged by Mr. *T.* againſt *Juſtin*, the Cenſure would fall hard againſt all the Commentators.

Mr. *T.* is ſo far capable of miſtaking the Point in Queſtion, as here to lay a Foundation for an imaginary Triumph. He thinks this Conceſſion, that the *Martyr* was deſtitute of ſupernatural Aid in underſtanding and explaining the Scriptures, a Diſproof of *Irenæus*'s Teſtimony, that "All, "who were truly Diſciples of Jeſus, wrought "Miracles in his Name." "Behold here," ſays he, "an Exception to the Univerſality of "*Irenæus*'s Aſſertion; and an Exception, "not of a *Boy*, a *Woman*, or *obſcure Layman*, but of a Scholar, an eminent Writer "and Champion; and at laſt a Martyr for

" the Chriſtian Cauſe. And this is in the
" particular Caſe of underſtanding the Scrip-
" tures, or if Mr. *D.* likes it better, the
" Myſteries of God." (P. 52.) Mr. *D.* He might have known, thinks theſe Caſes very diſtinct from each other, and both very different from that of working Miracles. But he goes on, " Is it, I aſk, ſuppoſeable, that
" God Almighty ſhould infuſe a Know-
" ledge of the Scriptures, or of any Myſtery
" whatſoever, into the very meaneſt of the
" People, and withhold it from a Perſon
" of ſuch an exalted Character in the
" Church as *Juſtin Martyr* was?" I would aſk in Return, againſt Whom this Gentleman is arguing? If againſt any One, I think it is againſt Dr. *M.* who has declared, in one Part at leaſt, that extraordinary Illuminations, Viſions, or Divine Impreſſions, do not in any Manner affect or relate to the Queſtion now before Us. But where did Mr. *T.* find any ſuch Repreſentation as He ſeems in this Place to be oppoſing? I never heard of any One, who thought that *Juſtin* was inſpired in his Expoſitions of Scriptures, or that tho' *He* was not, yet the *common People* were generally or often ſo favoured. If Mr. *T.* thinks that " this Cir-
" cumſtance (namely that *Juſtin Martyr*
" was not ſo inſpired) might induce a Man

" to

" to believe that no ſuch extraordinary Gift " was at that Time beſtowed upon any " Body;" yet as it does not appear to have been claimed by Any Body, No ill Conſequence can follow, no Prejudice can ariſe againſt the Teſtimony of the Fathers in the Points which They did claim, and which cannot be diſproved. I had obſerved *in the Free Anſwer*, that in all the Paſſages cited by Dr. *M.* I found no ſuch Claim as that of an extraordinary Power of expounding the Holy Scriptures;---that the Knowledge of Myſteries might ſupernaturally be infuſed without it;---that ſuch Gifts ſeem to have been occaſional only, and to have ceaſed very early in the Church, the Neceſſity of them ceaſing after the very firſt Exigency. St. *Paul*, We know, being from *Jeruſalem* at the Time of his Converſion, had the Knowledge of the Chriſtian Doctrines ſupernaturally infuſed into Him by Revelation, and Others in the like Situation might be favoured with the like Bleſſing, whilſt Thoſe, who had Opportunities of full Inſtruction by *Human Means*, might well be left to them for Information. Such a Gift could be expected no longer than ſuch particular Uſes could be ſerved by it, and this in the ſame Age might be more *neceſſary* or *uſeful* at leaſt to One Perſon than Another;

and it would be no Kind of Objection, that one Perſon could not be poſſeſſed of it, becauſe Another, of equal Eminence in other Reſpects, was not favoured with it. Theſe Gifts were given in great Variety, ſo as might beſt Anſwer the Neceſſities of the Diſciples ſo diſtinguiſhed, or the Uſes of the Church in general. *Juſtin Martyr* therefore might have this Talent and not Others; or Others, and not this, without any Appearance of Inconſiſtency with the Diſpenſation of Miracles as ſet forth in the New Teſtament. If indeed an *inſpired* Knowledge of the Senſe of the Scriptures had been the common Privilege of the Meaneſt Diſciples, it would not have been credible, that *Juſtin Martyr* ſhould have been deſtitute of it; but as no ſuch Thing is pretended, Mr. *T.* in this Place is merely combating with his own Miſtake. What the *Prophetical Gifts* were, which *Juſtin* ſays were continued among them to his Time, it may not be eaſy to ſay certainly; but He does not ſay, or intimate, that they were *inſpired* Interpretations of the Old Teſtament. Moſt probably they were particular Revelations on ſudden Exigencies, or Directions what Meaſures or Perſons ſhould be employed on the Occaſion, ſuch as thoſe recorded *Acts* xi. 28, and xiii. 2.

Whatever

Whatever They were, They might be beſtowed upon *One* upon a preſſing Exigency, and not upon *Another*, tho' a Biſhop or Martyr, where no ſuch Exigency appeared to require it.

But the proper Queſtion is, What is it to the preſent Purpoſe, whether He had any of the *Prophetical Gifts* or not? Might He not want thoſe, and yet be endued with the Power of *working Miracles*? St. *Paul*'s Interrogation before alluded to, implies that theſe Gifts were commonly given to diſtinct Perſons, and were leſs to be expected in the ſame Character? *Are all Apoſtles?* ſays He, *Are All Prophets? Are All Teachers? Are All Workers of Miracles?* 1 Cor. xii. 29. Dr. *M.* underſtood his Argument better than to put his Objection in this Manner. He charged *Juſtin* directly with *Falſification*, in pretending to a Gift which He had not; and this Charge, if ſupported, would have hurt his *Moral* Character, for We could not have depended on his Veracity in any Inſtance, who was detected to falſify in One. But the *Defender* has varied the Objection, has given up the Point, as not material, whether He made any ſuch Pretenſions or not; and has ſtated the Caſe thus, that He confeſſedly had not one particular Gift, and therefore could not have any other. He was

not *inſpired* in his Interpretation of the Scriptures, and therefore could not *work a Miracle*. This Repreſentation of his Objection, which is a juſt one, will, I preſume, make any other Anſwer needleſs.

Dr. *M.* proceeded farther, and charged *Juſtin* with two ſuch groſs Miſtakes in *plain and obvious Facts*, as He called them, that no One, as He inferred, could be a competent Judge of other Matters, who was capable of being deceived in theſe. I took theſe into Conſideration, and ſhewed what Reaſon there was to think that He was *not* miſtaken in theſe Caſes; or that his *Miſtakes*, if they were ſuch, could no Way hurt his Character, as a *Witneſs of Facts*. Theſe Points Mr. *T.* thought fit to paſs over in Silence, and has neither given up, nor defended the Dr's Charge on this Head; ſo that what I had offered on that Subject, ſtands as yet in its full Force.

I had obſerved upon the Whole, that ſhould We admit all the falſe Opinions and weak Reaſonings, which Dr. *M.* has charged upon this Father, yet they would not affect his Credit as *a Witneſs of Matter of Fact*. " Pray" ſays Mr. *T.* " what Fact " is He a Witneſs to? Why He is a Witneſs to this Fact, that Miraculous Powers were continued and frequently exerciſed amongſt Chriſtians in his Days. " But for my

" Part,

" Part, ſays Mr. *T.* I ſee none; not a " ſingle Inſtance produced." This again is a very diſtinct Point, and a very plain Evaſion. For what *Juſtin* aſſerts of *many* He plainly aſſerts of *more* than a *ſingle Inſtance*. If I teſtify, that I ſaw a Phyſician cure an hundred Perſons in any peculiar Method, Am not I as much a Witneſs of a Matter of Fact, as if I teſtified the ſame with Reſpect to a ſingle Inſtance? And would not my Qualifications, as a *Witneſs*, of Courſe be canvaſſed? Or would Any One think it ſufficient to ſay, that He ſaw no Fact that I was Witneſs to; not a ſingle Inſtance produced? If the Enquiry was made on ſuch an Occaſion, why I ſpecified the *whole Number* rather than named any one *particular* Perſon, poſſibly I might anſwer, that I thought this Method the moſt ſatisfactory; that ſuch *repeated* Inſtances would be more convincing, and would cut off thoſe Evaſions, which might more plauſibly be offered in a *ſingle Caſe*. And perhaps the Primitive Writers might have aſſigned the ſame Reaſon, could They have foreſeen this Objection to their Teſtimony.

But Mr. *T.* adds ſomewhat, which ſeems more to his Purpoſe, " We do not find *Juſ-* " *tin Martyr* affirming the Truth of any " One Miracle as actually having been the

"Object of his own Senſes." If He means that He has not uſed theſe very Words, poſſibly it may be true; but if He means, that He does not ſpeak of them as Matters of frequent Occurrence to the Senſes of *Himſelf*, as well as of *Others*, the contrary may eaſily be proved. The very Teſtimonies produced from Him by Dr. *M.* are ſufficient to prove it; and to theſe Some Others may be added. The Dr. obſerves, that "He "frequently appeals to what Every One "might ſee with his own Eyes in every Part "of the World:" which does not look like the Sentence of a Man, who had not ſeen theſe Things with his own Eyes Himſelf: and He particularly tells the *Roman* Senate, that theſe Cures not only had been done, but were even then done thro' the Name of the *crucified Jeſus*. But ſays, Mr. *T.* "Neither "in his Apology, or his Diſpute with the "*Jew*, is there one Event indiſputably *ſu-* "*pernatural* related or referred to:" That is again, not *One* Event, becauſe *Many* ſuch are referred to, and made Matter of Triumph over the *Jews*, from whom theſe ſupernatural Gifts confeſſedly were departed. But Why, Mr. *T.* means to ſay, was not One Inſtance particularly recorded on this Occaſion with all its Circumſtances? It is hard to write or to argue in ſuch a Manner

as

as to preclude all Objections, but it ſeems very probable that had theſe Apologiſts followed the Method now preſcribed to them, and ſpecified a particular Caſe, the *Jews* or *Heathens* in thoſe Days would have drawn Matter of Suſpicion from that very Method, and have converted it into an Objection. Why, might They, and probably would They have argued, is a particular Inſtance ſingled out, in which there may be Circumſtances which We are ignorant of, and cannot account for? If This ſuppoſed Miracle was wrought in Vindication of their Religion, why are not ſuch Miracles more commonly wrought, which might prevent this Objection? Why are not Appeals made to the *frequent* Exerciſe of this Power, and Why are We not called on to ſee and examine them at any Time upon an important Occaſion? This, 'tis likely would have been the Courſe of *their* Objection, if theſe Primitive Writers had only given *particular Inſtances*; and would not This have been more plauſible than the preſent Exception of the *Want* of ſingle Inſtances? Thoſe Writers thought ſo, and I ſee no Reaſon to think that They did not judge right: or that this Method of challenging all Adverſaries to enquire, and appealing to what All might ſee with their own Eyes in all Parts of the World, was

not

not the moſt convincing and ſatisfactory that could be offered.

Mr. *T.* ſays, He has done with *Juſtin Martyr*, and will proceed to *Irenæus*; and here He finds himſelf "obliged to repeat the "Queſtion, What are the Miraculous Facts "which He has atteſted? Does He ſay, that "He ever performed One Himſelf? No ſuch "Matter.---Does He ſay, He had ever ſeen "a Miracle performed by Another? Not ſo "much as this neither is affirmed." The Anſwer muſt be repeated, that He has not ſaid this in theſe Words, but He has ſaid what implies this and much more, and in a Manner much more ſatisfactory and unexceptionable. One ſhould be tempted to think, that Mr. *T.* not only had not read *Irenæus*, but not even the Author whom he has attempted to defend. For the Extract, which He has made from this Father, would unanſwerably have obviated all that is here ſuggeſted. *All that* "are truly Diſciples of "*Jeſus*," ſays *Irenæus*, "receiving Grace "from Him, wrought Miracles in his "Name;" but that this general Aſſertion might not be miſtaken, as if theſe Gifts were exerted on *trivial* Occaſions, or as if they were *all* given to the *ſame Perſon*, ſo that He, who had not One, might be preſumed to be deſtitute of the Reſt, He adds expreſſly,

"for

" for the Good of Mankind, according to
" the Gift which Each Man had received;
" Some caſt out Devils;---Others had Know-
" ledge of future Events, Viſions, and Pro-
" phetical Sayings: Others healed the Sick
" by Impoſition of Hands: That even the
" Dead had been raiſed up, and lived after-
" wards many Years among them, that it
" was impoſſible to reckon up all the
" mighty Works which the Church per-
" formed every Day to the Benefit of Na-
" tions; neither deceiving, nor making a
" Gain of Any, but freely beſtowing what
" it had freely received. And as to the par-
" ticular Miracle of raiſing the Dead, He
" declares it to have been frequently per-
" formed on neceſſary Occaſions; when by
" great Faſting, and the joint Supplication of
" the Church of that Place, the Spirit of
" the Dead Perſon returned into Him, and
" the Man was given back to the Prayers of
" the Saints.---And again, We hear Many,
" ſays He, in the Church indued with pro-
" phetic Gifts, ſpeaking with all Kind of
" Tongues; laying open the Secrets of Men
" for the Publick Good, and expounding the
" Myſteries of God." Could Any Teſti-
mony be more expreſs, that theſe Gifts had
been the Object of his own Senſes? He
avoids the Mention of any *particular Inſtance*,
becauſe

becauſe He lays the Streſs of his Argument on the *Frequency* of them, on the *Number* of the Perſons who were thus endowed, on the *many* and *publick* Occaſions which They took to exert theſe Gifts, whenever They could ſerve the Good of Mankind. He ſpeaks in ſuch a Manner, as to *include* Himſelf amongſt the *Many*, but does not claim it as his *peculiar* Privilege, becauſe it was not ſo, and becauſe He might well eſteem it more convincing to Others, to inſiſt on the *diffuſive* Communication of theſe Gifts to ſo many of the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, on proper and important Occaſions. Had he ſaid, "I "can perform ſuch a Miracle, or I have "ſeen ſuch an One performed," Would not ſuch a Teſtimony have been leſs ſatisfactory *then*, and been more eaſily ridiculed and evaded *now*, than ſuch an explicit and publick Appeal to the *numerous* Inſtances, in which their Adverſaries might receive Satisfaction? If They were favoured with ſuch *frequent* Exerciſes of theſe Gifts, Why ſhould They forego the Advantage to their Argument, which would ariſe from thus urging it? Or why ſhould it now be an Objection to their Teſtimony, that They did not purſue a Method, which muſt have been leſs proper, on Suppoſition of the Truth of what They have aſſerted? If theſe Conſiderations

have

have been repeated, the Repetition of the ſame Objection ſeemed to make it neceſſary. It does not follow, that the Apologiſts did not *claim* theſe Gifts *Themſelves*, becauſe They did not *appropriate* and *confine* this Claim to Themſelves. If They ſpoke in ſuch *general* Terms, as muſt be ſuppoſed to *include* Themſelves as well as Others; and if the Reaſon of the Thing confirmed this Suppoſition, (it not being credible, as theſe Gentlemen are ready to allow, that theſe Gifts ſhould be diſpenſed to the meaner People, and withheld from their Governors and Teachers) then no Inference can be drawn to their Diſadvantage from this Method of Appeal; but a plain Benefit ariſes from it, in the *publick* Offer of ſuch *frequent* Means of Conviction to all Oppoſers. Thoſe Primitive Writers were Wiſe enough to make the beſt of their Argument, and if the Later Ones are not Wiſe enough to ſee the Force of it, That ſhall, I hope, be eſteemed no Prejudice to the Prudence or Fidelity of the Teſtimony of the Former.

I had obſerved that "ſcarce Any Thing "more is laid to the Charge of *Irenæus*, than "a Collection of falſe Opinions, which, if "All admitted, are Nothing to the Purpoſe "as to the Point in Queſtion concerning his "Atteſtation of miraculous Facts." Mr. T. thinks

thinks This would be a good deal to the Purpoſe, but aſſigns no Reaſon for it, nor makes any Attempt to prove that *Infallibility* is neceſſary to the Character of a competent *Witneſs of Facts*. But "tho' This, He ſays, "would in Truth be a good Deal, yet it is "not quite all. Something more is laid to "his Charge, and the Words *ſcarce* imply "Mr. *D.* was ſenſible of it." Dr. *M.* had not carried his Charge ſo high againſt *Irenæus* as He had done againſt *Juſtin*. He had not brought any formal Accuſation againſt this Father of making any Pretenſions to a Gift which he had not, but only collects all the *Miſtakes* in Opinion which He could find in his Writings (and ſome of them are miſrepreſented) and accuſes Him of ſupporting them by Tradition: Which, if proved, I may venture to ſay again, will ſcarce amount to more than an Error in Judgment. But Mr. *T.* attempts to make it out. "This," ſays He, "is not only delivering down falſe Doctrines, "but a falſe Fact." How ſo? Does it appear, that there was no ſuch Tradition? If there was, might not *Irenæus* report it, and believe the Thing too which had been reported to Him, without being guilty of any Falſification in Fact? But ſays Mr. *T.* "Which "Fact He muſt either have invented Himſelf, "or it muſt have been impoſed upon Him

"by

" by Some Body elſe." I may here in my Turn aſk, What Fact? The Whole Charge relates to traditionary Opinions, and tho' I eaſily ſee there muſt have been a Miſtake ſomewhere, yet I cannot ſee any Reaſon to conclude that any falſe Fact was invented any where. Let Us inſtance in the Opinion of the *Age of our Saviour*, or of the *Millenium*, or any other Point that is charged upon *Irenæus*. Suppoſe *Papias*, or any other very early Chriſtian, reading the *Goſpel* or the *Revelation* of St. *John*, and miſtaking the Senſe of what that Evangeliſt ſaid upon thoſe Articles, ſhould inſtruct his Diſciples that St. *John* taught ſo and ſo, might not They eaſily imagine, that the *Interpretation* itſelf was that Apoſtle's, and deliver it as ſuch to their Succeſſors, who of Courſe would continue the Account to After-Times? And might not *Irenæus* then make a very true Report, in ſaying that there was ſuch a Tradition, tho' the Tradition itſelf was originally founded upon a *Miſtake*? This is the very Account that *Euſebius*, as cited by Dr. *M.* gives Us of it; and according to this Account there was no *wilful Falſification* in Any Perſon, but an Early Miſtake was made and prevailed, till the Publication of it in Writing gave Occaſion to look into the Foundation of it. This may well be thought a good Argument againſt relying

lying too much on *Oral Tradition*, but by no Means invalidates the Credit of One, who made a true Report of ſuch a Tradition. A Man may be a moſt unexceptionable Witneſs of thoſe Matters of Fact, which come within his own Knowlege, tho' he might be impoſed upon by an Account which had long continued, and which was owing to an Error at firſt. The Poſſibility, the great Probability that the Errors ſpoken of did thus ariſe from the Miſtake of ſome very ancient Inſtructor, is a ſufficient Anſwer to what Dr. *M.* urges, that "if We abſolve *Irenæus* from the For-"gery, it muſt fall on Some Body elſe, more "ancient ſtill, and of Authority enough to "impoſe it upon Him" (*Free Inquiry*, P. 59.) There is no Neceſſity, no Reaſon to ſuppoſe a *Forgery* any where. A Wrong Method of Reaſoning, in a Perſon of Authority, might lay the Foundation of a wrong Doctrine, and whilſt this paſſed in Oral Tradition only, it might gain Strength by Continuance, and All this might happen, in the Manner before repreſented, without any *deſigned Fraud* in Any One. To this Suppoſition Fact correſponds, and it is remarkable, as I before obſerved, that That, which was the moſt palpable Miſtake, ſunk upon the Mention of it by *Irenæus*, becauſe ſuch publick Mention of it moſt probably

bably gave Occaſion to a publick Inquiry into it.

Mr. *T.* goes on to repeat Dr. *M*'s Quotations from *Photius*, and Dr. *Whitby*, and Dr. *Cave*, concerning the falſe and ſpurious Reaſonings of *Irenæus*, and his being betrayed into Errors by falſe Reports: And then adds, "Now what does Mr. *D.* urge to juſtify "*Irenæus* againſt all theſe Accuſations? Why "not a Word." P. 57. This, to ſpeak the ſofteſt, is a great Miſtake. I had obviated all that was urged on that Head, by obſerving, that falſe Opinions, or Miſtakes in Reaſoning are Nothing to the Purpoſe in a Queſtion concerning the Atteſtation of miraculous Facts. I enlarged on that Point; and added farther both of *Him* and *Juſtin Martyr*, that tho' the weakeſt Parts of their Writings had been collected, on Purpoſe to expoſe them, yet that a thorough Peruſal of them would yield many Inſtances of ſolid Reaſonings and correct Compoſitions, *&c.* ſuch as would give Us no ill Opinion of their *Judgment*, much leſs of their *Veracity*. This, I humbly apprehend, was not only *ſaying a Word*, but a Word to the Purpoſe, againſt ſuch general Charges as thoſe of *falſe Reaſonings*, when the Point in Diſpute was his Credit as a *Witneſs* of Facts. But in Reality, the Inſtances which Dr. *M.* has produced to hurt his Credit, are

not properly ſo much as thoſe of *falſe Reaſoning*. They are no more than *Typical* and *Allegorical* Repreſentations, which were uſed in Compliance with the Cuſtom of thoſe Times, and had their Uſe amongſt Thoſe who had been familiarized to thoſe Sort of Arguments. They appeared not to *them* in the ſame weak and feeble Light, as They do to *Us* who are accuſtomed to a better Way of Reaſoning; but I cannot think it any very material Objection to the Primitive Writers, that They conformed to the Times They lived in, and wrote in ſuch a Manner as might be more ſerviceable to their *Contemporaries* than to After-Ages.

Mr. *T.* adds, "He ſingles out the parti-"cular Miſtake imputed to *Irenæus* con-"cerning the *Old Age* of our Saviour, which "with all his Skill is impoſſible to be de-"fended, and drops all the Reſt." All the Reſt were obviated by the general Remark before-mentioned, but it ſeemed proper to ſingle out this Inſtance, becauſe it was the only one wherein the Charge amounted to *Forgery*. Dr. *M.* laid great Streſs on it; He introduced it three Times, and on the laſt obſerved, that "Whoever forged the Reſt of "the ſpurious Traditions above recited, yet "that which relates to the *Old Age of Jeſus*, "the moſt ſolemnly atteſted of them all, and

"peculiar

"peculiar to *Irenæus*, may fairly be preſumed "to be his own Forgery, becauſe it was ne-"ver embraced by Any Body elſe" (*Free Inquiry*, P. 59.) This gave it a Title to my particular Regard, and I took the whole Paſſage into Conſideration. But Mr. *T.* ſays, "it is impoſſible to be defended." Short and Peremptory, but no way ſatisfactory, unleſs Mr. *T*'s *Opinion* is to paſs for *Argument*. This I obſerve is the Method which He has uſed throughout his whole *Defence*. When He comes to any material Paſſage, which was the Foundation of the Diſpute between Us, He pronounces my Anſwer to be Nothing to the Purpoſe, and then He thinks the Buſineſs is done. But Dr. *M*'s *Defender* had Occaſion here, as well as elſewhere, for ſomewhat more than a *magiſterial Aſſertion*. I had charged the Dr. with miſrepreſenting *Irenæus* in this Paſſage, with dropping ſome of his Words on Purpoſe to miſrepreſent Him, with adding others to make his Argument appear ridiculous; and I ſhewed from a View of the whole Paſſage, how the Miſtake might eaſily ariſe without any wilful *Forgery*; and that as to the Plea of unanimous Tradition, That appeared, from the very Words uſed, to be meant rather of the *general Heads* of the Diſcourſe, in which it was *true*, than of this *particular Circumſtance*, in which it muſt have

been *erroneous*.--To all this the Reply is, that it is Mr. *T*'s Opinion, that "it is impoſſible "to be defended." But He adds, "Whe-"ther therefore We conſider Him as *Impoſing*, "or being *impoſed* upon, the Reſult will be "juſt the ſame. We can allow as little Cre-"dit to his Teſtimony upon one Suppoſition "as the other." (P. 58.) This is extraordinary indeed. According to this Account, A Man convicted of *wilful Falſhood*, and one who innocently continues a Tradition originally founded on a *Miſtake*, are on a Level with Reſpect to the Credit of their Teſtimony. Whereas I ſhould imagine, that He who had *wilfully falſified* in one Inſtance, was little to be depended upon in any other; but that He, who *faithfully made the Report* which was made to Him, tho' the Thing reported was ill-grounded, might yet be a very competent Witneſs, when He came to ſpeak of Facts within his own Knowlege.

This Diſtinction will likewiſe afford that clear and diſtinct Anſwer, which Mr. *T*. ſays it would have been very much to my Purpoſe to have given to the ſeveral Queſtions cited by Dr. *M*. and repeated by Himſelf, from Mr. *Chillingworth*. "If *Papias* could either by "his own Error, or a Deſire to deceive, cozen "the Fathers of the pureſt Age, why not "alſo in other Things? Why not in Twenty

"as well as One? And why might not "Twenty Others do it as well as He?" I am far from thinking this One of the moſt *ſhining* Paſſages in the excellent Author from whom it is cited, for all theſe *Poſſibilities* are of no Force againſt *real* Evidence and *poſitive* Teſtimony. If We take the moſt favourable Suppoſition, as I think We ought, that the Miſtake ſaid to be derived from *Papias*, was owing merely to *his own Error*, and not to a *Deſire to deceive*, then it is much leſs probable, that He ſhould miſtake in *twenty* Inſtances than in *One*. Or if He was that *Weak* Man that He is repreſented to be, it is ſtill much leſs probable, that *Twenty Wiſer Men* ſhould miſtake in like Manner. There is No End of putting ſuch Suppoſitions as theſe, and when they are thus carried on, they apparently tend to deſtroy all Credit in preſent Teſtimony, and all Faith in paſt Hiſtory. All Mankind *may be Knaves* or *Fools*, but the Queſtion is not, what They *may be*, but what They *are*; and We muſt judge and act upon the beſt Evidence that We can collect of Mens Characters; and a bare *Poſſibility* of the Contrary will not defeat or weaken the *Proofs* which We have of the Integrity and Underſtanding of Many of our Fellow-Creatures. However this Argument may look in Controverſy, a Man would be thought Mad in Com-

mon Life, who ſhould refuſe to truſt a Perſon of experienced Honeſty and Prudence, merely becauſe it was *poſſible* that He might miſtake or deceive in that particular Inſtance. A Thouſand ſuch Queſtions therefore would not invalidate the *Credit* of the primitive Fathers, in their Atteſtation of the miraculous Gifts, which continued amongſt them in their own Time: And tho' ſuch Conſiderations were of ſome Weight in Mr. *Chillingworth*'s Argument concerning the Uncertainty of Tradition, where the *Miſtake* of a Perſon in former Ages might eaſily be carried on by the Verbal Report of Succeſſors, and gain Credit for Want of Inclination or Opportunity to examine into it, yet what Connection have they with the Caſe of Thoſe, who reported Miracles of which They were Themſelves the *Workers* or *Witneſſes*, who committed theſe Reports and Claims to Writing in their own Times, challenged their Enemies to look into them, ſtaked their Lives on their Veracity, and in this Situation continued to propagate their Religion, and bring over many Converts to it, of the Great and the Wiſe, as well as of the Meaner and more Unlearned. The *Unanimity* of the Claimants in this Article, wherever or however ſituated, the uniform and concurrent Teſtimony of all the earlieſt Primitive Writers in all Parts of the World,

with

with Reſpect to the Continuance of miraculous Powers among them, is a Circumſtance of great Weight; for ſure there were ſome Wiſe and Good Men amongſt them, who could judge of ſuch a Point, and who would not falſify: Or can it be ſuppoſed that They would all hazard their Lives and their Salvation, by inſiſting on a Claim, in which They knew They were prevaricating with God and Man?

Under the Fourth Head of the *Free Inquiry*, Dr. *M.* propoſed to "take a particular "Review of all the ſeveral Gifts or Miracu-"lous Powers which were actually claimed "and pretended to have been poſſeſſed by "the Primitive Church." And the Firſt that he inſtanced in was that of *raiſing the Dead*, which *Irenæus* ſays was frequently performed on *neceſſary Occaſions*. I obſerved that there was great Streſs to be laid on that Clauſe, as obviating Dr. *M*'s Repreſentation, as if it were performed in every Pariſh or Place, where there was a Chriſtian Church, on which He founds his Wonder, that no Inſtance of it ſhould be recorded. "One ſingle Inſtance however," ſays Mr. *T.* "He has mentioned as ſlightly intimated "by *Euſebius*, from *Papias*, and which He "tells Us, *Euſebius* ſeems to rank among "the other fabulous Stories delivered by "that weak Man. To this Circumſtance

"Mr. *D.* ſays Nothing, tho' if a Church "Hiſtorian of Reputation, who lived ſo "near the Time as *Euſebius* did, rejects as "fabulous the only Inſtance of this Mira- "cle that ever was recorded, it cannot fail "of inducing a Suſpicion, that the whole "Pretence to it was groundleſs; it is at leaſt "a tolerable Proof, that He did not believe "it Himſelf. And if *Euſebius* did not be- "lieve it, why is it to be wondered at, that "Dr. *M.* gives no Credit to it?" Had Dr. *M.* drawn theſe Inferences from this Circumſtance, I certainly had not paſſed over it, which otherwiſe was very little material. It is as eaſy to ſay in the firſt Place, that *Euſebius* does not ſeem to rank this amongſt other fabulous Stories, but relates it without any Cenſure. Or had He given up this particular Inſtance, it would not follow that He diſbelieved all others; and We have Reaſon to believe the contrary, namely, that He did believe the Continuance of this Power in the Church, becauſe He has Himſelf preſerved to us the forementioned Teſtimony of *Irenæus*, which He certainly would not have done, had He not given Credit to it Himſelf.

But here the old Objection occurs, Why not One Single Inſtance recorded? That is, with Circumſtances of Time, and Place, and

Perſon.

Perſon. I had offered a *general* Reaſon, which might poſſibly account for this. "The ſuppoſed *Frequency* of this Miracle, "I ſaid, *might have been* the very Cauſe, "why particular Inſtances might not be re- "corded, ſince All were equally extraordi- "nary, and had no diſtinguiſhing Circum- "ſtances." Mr. *T.* "begs Leave to think that this is downright ridiculous." (P. 61.) He has my free Leave to think ſo of the Whole, or any Part of my Performance, and the rather ſo in this Part, becauſe He has not only given Us his Opinion, but made Some- thing like an Attempt to prove it. "Was it, "ſays He, that the People of ſuch a Coun- "try went to Bed at Night, and roſe again in "the Morning, the Plea might be admitted "as a pretty good One; but to ſee it ſeriouſly "urged in the Caſe of a Fact of ſo extraordi- "nary a Nature as That of *raiſing the* "*Dead*, I muſt beg Leave to think it "downright ridiculous. Conſider it well; "it is no trifling inconſiderable Buſineſs; the "reſtoring to Life again a Perſon known to "be Dead, is a ſtriking and moſt aſtoniſhing "Effect, that muſt awaken the Attention of "Every One that beheld it." This is true, but appears ſo in a much ſtronger Light to Us, who live long ſince theſe ſupernatural Effects have ceaſed, than it did to Thoſe who

who lived in the Age of Miracles. But ſays Mr. *T.* "We cannot ſuppoſe it to have happened ſo frequently as that it ceaſed to "appear extraordinary, *&c.*" So ſay I too, and therefore This was properly *Argumentum ad Hominem*, and related to Dr. *M*'s Miſrepreſentation of *Irenæus*, as if *He* had ſaid, that it was frequent in every Pariſh or Place where there was a Chriſtian Church. Had this been the Caſe, it would have grown ſo familiar as to be leſs ſtriking and aſtoniſhing, and the Frequency of other ſupernatural Gifts did of Courſe leſſen the Aſtoniſhment of this particular Miracle. But I obſerved againſt Dr. *M.* that the Frequency of this Miracle, being limited to *neceſſary Occaſions*, could be only *comparative*; and the Reaſon aſſigned, why poſſibly no particular Inſtances were recorded, was, not that they ceaſed to be extraordinary, but that "All were equally extraordinary and had "no diſtinguiſhing Circumſtances;" not that they were "undiſtinguiſhed from all other "Events, and unworthy the particular Re-"cital of every Writer of the Age," as Mr. *T.* repreſents it, but that the *Raiſing of the Dead* was ſo miraculous in every Inſtance, that there could be little Reaſon to record one Inſtance in Preference to All Others, and to omit the Reſt. Had one been recorded,

corded, the Queſtion then probably would have been, Why but One? Had One or More been recorded by Each Writer, theſe would have been ſtiled a *few*, and it would have been inferred, that the Caſe would have been more common if it happened at all; that the Collection was inconſiderable, and that the Appeal ought to have lain to a *general* Grant and a *frequent* Exerciſe of it. But this was not the only Conſideration that I offered on this Occaſion, tho' it was the only One that Mr. *T.* thought fit to take Notice of. I aſked farther, "Who ſhould be expected to record "theſe Inſtances?" Not *Heathen* Hiſtorians, becauſe They did not believe them, but rejected all ſuch Reports as impoſſible in themſelves; and becauſe if They had believed them, it would have been Self-Condemnation in them, to have recorded them: Not *Chriſtian* Hiſtorians, becauſe there were none ſuch in the three firſt Centuries, and becauſe, if there had been, ſuch a Specification of the Inſtances of the Perſon raiſed might have been attended with Inconveniences, which it was their Buſineſs to provide againſt; whereas their Argument held at leaſt as good by a *general* Aſſertion of the Fact as exemplified in *many* Inſtances rather than in One. Our Lord Himſelf, who

certainly

certainly could, and who actually did escape by Miracle, when Danger unavoidably preſſed on Him, whilſt *his Hour was not yet come*, did yet, by Way of Pattern to his Diſciples, uſe great Precaution to avoid ſuch Danger; and if They followed this Example, and omitted to Name the Perſons raiſed, that They might not bring down Perſecution and Vengeance on them, They ſhewed their Piety and Prudence in ſo Doing. After all, We know not perhaps the Whole of their Reaſons, why They did not follow this Method now ſo importunately called for; but this Omiſſion is no Sort of Diſproof of the Fact, of which We have ſuch unqueſtionable Teſtimony. When our Saviour ſent out the *Twelve* in his own Life-Time, He gave them this in Commiſſion amongſt other Privileges, to *raiſe the Dead*, with this particular Injunction, that *as They had freely received*, ſo *They ſhould freely give*. It cannot be doubted, but that, in Obedience both to their Maſter's Precept, and in Good-will to their Fellow-Creatures, They exerted this Talent, communicated this Bleſſing, and reſtored Life to the Dead; and yet there is not a ſingle Inſtance of it recorded. Theſe were the firſt Inſtances of this Kind that had happened amongſt them, even before any that their Bleſſed Maſter had wrought, according to the Hiſtory of the

Goſpel,

Goſpel, and of Courſe occaſioned the greateſt Surprize and Aſtoniſhment, and yet the *Names* of the *Perſons* that received this high Benefit from them, and the Circumſtances of the Caſes, are all paſſed over in Silence as well by the Inſpired Writers as by All Others. As This Power was expreſſly given to the Apoſtles, whilſt our Saviour was on Earth, it may reaſonably be preſumed, that it was *continued* to them after his Aſcenſion, and the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, and yet We find but one Inſtance of any Perſon reſtor'd to Life by any One of the *Twelve* throughout the New Teſtament, I mean that of *Tabitha*, by St. *Peter*, and of *Eutychus* only by St. *Paul*: Still have we Reaſon to conclude that They All had the ſame Gift, and exerted it on neceſſary Occaſions, as *Irenæus* expreſſes it, tho' but one or two particular Caſes are tranſmitted to Us by the *Apoſtolical* Writers, any more than by the *Eccleſiaſtical* Ones; and whatever Conſiderations may account for the Omiſſion of the Former, may ſerve as well for the Latter. The Caſe of *Autolycus* comes next under Review, where Mr. *T.* inſtead of defending Dr. *M's* Repreſentation, or invalidating mine, is pleaſed again to give Us his Word, that All that I have ſaid on this Point only "ſhews, "how weakly Any Man can argue, when

"He

"He engages to defend the wrong Side of "a Queſtion." But this is much eaſier ſaid than proved. It became Dr. *M*'s *Defender* to ſhew the Weakneſs of my Arguing on this Point, and to prove that I had the wrong Side of the Queſtion. I pointed to ſeveral Miſtakes in Dr. *M*'s Account of this Matter. I ſhewed that *Autolycus* made no ſuch Offer of turning Chriſtian on ſeeing a Perſon raiſed, as ſhould induce Him to work ſuch a Miracle; as is very plain from *Theophilus*'s Anſwer. I ſhewed likewiſe, both from the Reaſon of the Thing, and from another Part of *Theophilus*'s Anſwer, that *Autolycus*'s Demand was not to ſee One that had *formerly* been raiſed, but to ſee One raiſed in *his own Preſence*; and therefore there might be ſeveral Such then living, and ready to have been produced, for any Thing that appears to the contrary from this Paſſage. This was the very Point on which Dr. *M.* introduced the Mention of this Caſe, and in which I acknowledged the Objection to be plauſible. *Irenæus* had ſaid, that "even "the Dead had been raiſed, and lived af-"terwards many Years among them." Dr. *M.* thought to diſprove this by obſerving, that "in the very ſame Age, when *Autoly-*"*cus*, an eminent Heathen, challenged "*Theophilus*, Biſhop of *Antioch*, to ſhew Him

"but

"but One Perſon, who had been raiſed "from the Dead, He was not able to give "Him that Satisfaction." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 73.) In this Light this Paſſage was pertinent to Dr. *M*'s Purpoſe, becauſe it might well ſeem unlikely, that All the Perſons that *Irenæus* ſpoke of, were already Dead the ſecond Time, and not an Inſtance to be produced for *Autolycus*'s Satisfaction. It was therefore to the Purpoſe to ſhew, that this was not the Senſe of *Autolycus*'s Demand, that He ſpoke of ſome *preſent*, and not of any *former* Inſtance; and that therefore *Any* or *All* of Thoſe, of whom *Irenæus* ſpake, might yet be Living, there being no Occaſion or Thought of producing or mentioning them in this Controverſy between *Autolycus* and *Theophilus*. Thus the Force of Dr. *M*'s Objection was taken off, and the forementioned Teſtimony of *Irenæus* juſtified from any ſeeming Contradiction to it in any other Part of Hiſtory: But the *Defender* did not ſee, or did not attend to it in this Light, but runs off to another Point, and is pleaſed to call this moſt excellent Anſwer of *Theophilus* to his Friend's Demand, "Nothing but "Shuffle and Evaſion, plainly demonſtrating, "that He was not able to give Him the "Satisfaction He required, either by raiſing "a Perſon Himſelf, by letting Him ſee

"One

"One raiſed by any other, or by ſhewing "Him one now alive, whom He could "make ſufficient Proof to have been once "Dead." Theſe Caſes are very different. He might be able to ſhew Him One who had formerly been raiſed from the Dead, and whom He could prove to have been ſo raiſed; but *Autolycus* would have liſtened to no Proof of that Kind, for He inſiſted on *ſeeing* One raiſed himſelf; and whether *Theophilus* could, or could not do this, has no Relation to the Teſtimony of *Irenæus*, that *Others had been raiſed*, which Dr. *M.* endeavoured to impeach. *Theophilus* might poſſibly have this Gift, and yet not think this a *proper Occaſion* to exert it, and the Reaſonings, which He Uſes in his Anſwer, very much favour this Suppoſition. Or ſuppoſe *He* had it not, *Irenæus* might have it; or ſuppoſe *Neither of them* had, *Others* might have been favoured with it; or at leaſt Others might have met with more *neceſſary Occaſions* and Calls to exert it. It is remarkable, that *Irenæus* repreſents this particular Gift not ſo properly as the Endowment of any *Particular Perſon*, as the Endowment of *the Church*, exerciſed and obtained by the united Prayers of the Faithful. Now tho' *Theophilus* might know that ſuch a Gift ſtill continued in *the Church*, yet He might reaſonably judge, that the

Church

Church might not think this Exigency ſufficient to occaſion them to procure ſuch a miraculous Work by particular Devotion, and eſpecially as He Himſelf knew enough of *Autolycus* beforehand, to believe that even the Working of ſuch a Miracle would be *inſufficient* for his Conviction. This does not therefore ſeem to be One of thoſe *neceſſary Occaſions*, of which *Irenæus* ſpeaks, on which ſuch a Miracle was likely to be performed. *Autolycus* does not appear by the Account of Him to have been a Perſon of ſuch extraordinary Worth, as to induce the Church to apply for ſuch a ſupernatural Interpoſition merely for his particular Satisfaction. Neither is it clear, that the Conviction of Adverſaries was the *ſole* or *chief* End of this Gift of raiſing the Dead. Dr. *M.* allows, that the Deſign of thoſe extraordinary Gifts, which He admits to have been beſtowed upon the Diſciples at firſt, was "to enable "them, not only more eaſily to over-rule "the inveterate Prejudices both of the *Jews* "and *Gentiles*, but alſo, to bear up againſt "the diſcouraging Shocks of popular Rage "and Perſecution, which They were taught "to expect, in this Noviciate of their Mi-"niſtry." (Pref. P. 28.) Now This Miracle in particular might very probably be wrought chiefly for this latter End. It is certain it

had a ſtrong Tendency to anſwer that Purpoſe, and to ſupport the Spirits of Diſciples under the ſevereſt Perſecutions. The Enemies of the Goſpel, as *Irenæus* obſerves, thought the Thing *impoſſible* in itſelf, and therefore did not trouble themſelves to look into any particular Reports about it. This might be one Reaſon, why it was leſs frequently offered to them, and why We hear leſs of this Miracle in particular from other Writers, who make Mention of other ſupernatural Endowments. Yet ſtill it might be of great Uſe in the Church, whenever it was wrought, for the *Comfort* and Encouragement of *Believers*, tho' not for the *Satisfaction* and Conviction of *Gainſayers*. The *Neceſſity* of the *Occaſion* ſpoken of moſt probably relates to the *Uſefulneſs* and *Importance of* the *Perſon to be raiſed*, whoſe Continuance in Life was deemed of ſo much Conſequence to the Service of their Religion, that the Church thought fit to ſolicit it by united and extraordinary Devotion. This is another Reaſon, why, tho' all that *Irenæus* had ſaid was true, and tho' the ſame Power ſtill continued in the Church, yet *Theophilus* might not be able to give *Autolycus* the Satisfaction that He demanded, there being no ſuch eminent Perſon juſt at that Time deceaſed at *Antioch*, whom the Church might think fit

to

to recall by ſo miraculous an Interpoſition. But ſuppoſe farther, that the Power of *raiſing the Dead*, had reſted ſolely in a *ſingle* Perſon, and that *Theophilus* had claimed to be that Perſon, his not exerting this Power to pleaſe *Autolycus*, would be no Diſproof of ſuch his Pretenſion. He declares that if it was done, *Autolycus* would ſtill find ſome Objection to it; and whether We impute the Exertion of ſuch a Power to *ſudden Impulſe*, or to a *rational Judgment* of the Caſe, in neither Light could this be a proper Occaſion for ſuch a Miraculous Interpoſition. Our Saviour directed them *not to caſt their Pearls before Swine*, and He Himſelf, after all his Miracles, refuſed to add one more for the Satisfaction of Thoſe, who declared They would believe on Him, if he would then deſcend from the Croſs at their Summons. Why ſuch extraordinary Means of Conviction were granted to Some, and not to others, is another Queſtion, but it is no Objection againſt the poſitive Evidence that is offered, that ſome Miracles were wrought, that they were not wrought whenever they were called for; at leaſt it is no Objection, but what would hold as ſtrongly againſt thoſe Miracles recorded in *Scripture*, as againſt thoſe which are related in *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*. This I had

obſerved before, tho' Mr. *T.* thought fit to take no Notice of it.

Under the next Gift reviewed, That of *Healing the Sick*, Dr. *M.* Himſelf introduced the Mention of *Proculus*'s curing the Emperor *Severus* of a certain Diſtemper by the Uſe of Oil, as related by *Tertullian*; upon which I obſerved, that "here the Method "preſcribed by Dr. *M.* to his Anſwerers, "had been uſed beforehand; the Perſons "Healing and Healed are ſpecified, and ſome "ſpecial Benefit of the Miracle credibly "reported." Of the Miracle ſays Mr. *T.* "I aſk of what Miracle? *Tertullian* ſays "Nothing of a Miracle in the Caſe, and "why We are to lay a greater Streſs up-"on it, and call it a Miracle when He does "not, there is no Reaſon yet aſſigned." (P. 63.) He adds, "When a Man has once "got his Head full of Miracles, the com-"moneſt Events in Nature, the Riſing of "the Sun at Six o'Clock in the Morning, "may be deemed Miraculous." *This*, as this Gentleman elſewhere expreſſes Himſelf, *may, if You pleaſe, be deemed Harangue and Declamation*, but I will add that it is neither *Wit*, nor *Reaſon*, nor *Good-Breeding*. It is a contemptuous Treatment of a Perſon differing in Opinion, for which No Occaſion was given, and a Triumph extremely unſuitable

ſuitable to that ſuperficial View of the Argument, and feeble Attempt to ſupport it, diſcernible throughout this Defence.---But to the Point. Whatever was the Intent and Force of this Reflection, it was ſuch as involves Dr. *M.* in the intended Cenſure, as well as his Opponents. For *He had got his Head ſo full of Miracles*, that He underſtood this as a Report meant by *Tertullian* of a miraculous Cure, and introduced it as ſuch, tho' it was his Deſign to prove that *Tertullian* was miſtaken in repreſenting it as ſuch. Had he not conſidered it as a *Plea* of this Sort, it had not been to his Purpoſe to have cited it under this Head; whereas He cited it here on Purpoſe to ſhew the *Error* of this Plea. But Mr. *T*, goes farther, and does not allow, that *Tertullian* Himſelf offered it as an Inſtance of a miraculous Cure, and aſks, "Why we ſhould lay a "greater Streſs on it than the Apologiſt "Himſelf did?" We muſt refer therefore to the *Original Account*, to know what Streſs the Author of it did really lay upon it, and from the *Manner* in which it is introduced, and the *Nature* of the Argument of which it is a Part, it will be Eaſy to diſcern what He intended by it. If the *Connection* of it with *other* miraculous Cures, urged as a Reaſon why the Magiſtrates ſhould ceaſe

to perſecute the Chriſtians by whom They enjoyed ſuch Benefits, be any Sort of Proof, that This was meant of a *miraculous* Cure likewiſe, This Evidence of it plainly remains to Us from the Paſſage itſelf. *Tertullian* refers the *Preſident of Africa* to ſome Perſons, who could give Him ſuch Information, mentions a Caſe or two which They could point out to Him, of their own Knowlege, of *Demoniacks* who had been diſpoſſeſſed by Chriſtians, goes on to add, that Many conſiderable Perſons, (to paſs over thoſe of a meaner Station) had been by them delivered from *Demons*, and *other Diſtempers*, and then introduces the Mention of the Cure of the Emperor *Severus* by *Proculus*, by the Uſe of Oil, whom the Emperor Himſelf well knew to be a Chriſtian, and favoured both his Perſon and Cauſe for that Purpoſe.—*Hæc omnia Tibi & de Officio ſuggeri poſſunt, & ab eiſdem Advocatis, qui & ipſi Beneficia habent Chriſtianorum, licet adclament quæ volunt. Nam & cujuſdam Notarius, cum a Dæmone precipitaretur, liberatus eſt: & quorundam Propinquus & Puerulus. Et quanti Honeſti Viri, (de Vulgaribus enim non dicimus) aut a Dæmoniis aut Valetudinibus remediati ſunt. Ipſe etiam Severus, Pater Antonini, Chriſtianorum memor fuit. Nam & Proculum Chriſtianum, qui Torpacion cognominabatur Euhodæ Procuratorem,*

curatorem, qui eum per Oleum aliquando curaverat, requisivit, & in Palatio suo habuit usque ad Mortem ejus: Now when He mentions thus together the *Dispossession of Demons*, and the *Cure of other Distempers*, as the former was known to be a *supernatural* Work, He must most naturally be understood to speak of the same *miraculous* Power in the *Healing of Other Distempers*, unless He has himself made the Distinction, and shewn by some other Circumstance, that He spoke only of the common *Medicinal Arts* in Practice amongst them. But no such Circumstance appears; On the contrary He speaks of these Cures in Conjunction with the Dispossession of Demons, as the *peculiar* Benefits, which the *Heathens* Themselves often received from *Christians*; and it is well-known that the Power of *Healing the Sick* was One of the Claims of these Christians, and is frequently mentioned in all their Writings amongst other *supernatural* Gifts. And surely there would have been much less Propriety in the Apology itself, and the Force of the Address to *Scapula*, to say, You should favour Us Christians, because We have Those among Us who can *dispossess Demoniacs*, and Others who are *good Physicians* in natural Cases, than if the Meaning was, You enjoy the Benefit of our su-

pernatural Gifts, not only in ejecting Demons, but in the Relief of all other Bodily Neceſſities. And then comes in the Account of the Cure of the Emperor *Severus* by *Proculus*, a Chriſtian. But the Mention of the *Manner*, in which this Cure was performed, is a more diſtinguiſhing Proof that it was meant of a miraculous Inſtance of Healing. What Occaſion could *Tertullian* have to ſpecify the Remedy by which this happy Effect was wrought, but only to ſhew that it was *that* which was appropriated by Apoſtolical Authority and Primitive Practice to the *ſupernatural* Cure of Diſeaſes? On what Argument could it be to the Heathens to ſpare the Chriſtians on this Account, if This was only meant of a *natural* Application, ſince the Secret was now diſcovered, the Remedy was eaſy, and capable of being applied as well by Themſelves as by Any Others. But when We conſider that there is a *Text* ſtill in our Bible, which preſcribes the *Anointing with Oyl* in the Caſe of *ſupernatural* Cures, that *Tertullian* had the Bible in his Hands, and has referred to this very Practice, it is not credible that He would have done this, if He had been ſpeaking merely of a *Phyſical* Application in a natural Way. He would rather have avoided the Mention of this Preſcription, leſt He

ſhould

ſhould ſeem to reflect on the *Manner* of working *ſupernatural* Cures, weaken thereby the Apoſtle's Authority, and the Claim ſo often repeated of the *Gift of Healing*. It is remarkable that tho' He has mentioned the *Remedy*, He has taken no Notice of the *Kind of the Diſtemper*, which was very proper, if He was ſpeaking of a *Miracle*, this Method of Cure *by Oil* in that Caſe being equally applicable to *all* Diſtempers; but is utterly unaccountable, if He ſpoke of the Recovery as owing merely to the *natural* Effect of the *Oil*. Dr. *M.* however, obſerves on the Occaſion, that the natural Power and Efficacy of Oil itſelf is found in our Days to be ſufficient to cure the moſt threatning Effects of the *Bite of a Viper*, and therefore might effect the other Cures ſpoken of without any Miracle. But even This is a late Diſcovery, and it will be a more ſurprizing Diſcovery ſtill, if Dr. *M.* thinks that becauſe it may expel a particular Poiſon, therefore may cure all other Diſeaſes in a natural Way. Yet St. *James* preſcribed it for the *Healing of Sickneſs* in general, without any Mention of the *Bite of a Viper*, and it is leaſt of all probable, that That ſhould be the particular Caſe of the Emperor *Severus*.

Dr.

Dr. *M*'s next Argument was this, that the Heathens pretended to the ſame Gift, and that therefore the Pretence of Chriſtians to a miraculous Power in healing Diſeaſes could have little Effect towards making Proſelytes amongſt thoſe who pretended to the ſame Power. I anſwered, that "nothing "could be more proper for their Conviction "than a Claim of ſuperior Power in the ſame "Way;" upon which Mr. *T.* remarks, "Now it is apparent to me, that *a Claim* "only *of ſuperior Power in the ſame Way*, "was not ſufficient for their Conviction, that "Nothing leſs was requiſite than clear and "undeniable Proof." (P. 65.) What Trifling is this? Did I ſay, *a Claim only*, or could I be ſuppoſed to mean a *Claim* unſupported by *Proof*? Nay This Support was not only *implied*, but *expreſſed* in the remaining Part of the Sentence, which Mr. *T.* thought fit to drop. "Nothing," ſaid I, "could be "more proper for their Conviction than a "Claim of ſuperior Power in the ſame "Way, which might detect their Preten-"ſions, if falſe; and if they were real, "might ſhew the mightier Hand of God "beyond that of inferior Agents." Was not This ſpeaking of a *well-grounded* Claim, and ſuch as, upon the very Suppoſition, was founded on ſufficient Proof. But Mr. *T.* ſays,

ſays, "no Example of this is produced." I anſwer the *Succeſs* of Chriſtianity, under this Competition of Claims between the Heathens and Chriſtians, is a Proof that there were many ſuch Examples. It is a Proof likewiſe againſt Dr. *M.* that this miraculous Power when challenged by Chriſtians, was capable of exciting Attention, and of working Conviction in Conſequence of it. Neither is there any Reaſon to give up what was offered on the Caſe of *Proculus*, or to ſuppoſe, that this was not one Example of it. *Severus* was not in Himſelf diſpoſed to be favourable to the Chriſtians. Neither his Temper nor Education led Him to any ſuch Favour. Nor can it well be ſuppoſed, that He would have applied to One of theſe People for Aſſiſtance in his Diſtemper, whilſt He could have Hopes from any other Quarter. In his Situation He could not want Intelligence either of Thoſe, who had the beſt Reputation for their Skill in curing Diſeaſes in a *natural* Way, or of Thoſe who pretended to the *Power of Healing* by a *ſupernatural* Gift. Whatever Applications were made by Any of theſe, failed of Succeſs. He applied to a Chriſtian, and was cured by the *Uſe of Oil*, the very Method preſcribed and practiſed by Believers in the Caſe of *miraculous* Cures. This is the Fact, and the Preſumption of his having firſt tried

the

the Pretenders of his own Religion, ariſes with the greateſt Probability from the Circumſtances of the Caſe, from the Principles, and Practices, and Station of *Severus*. M. *T.* ſays "We don't know that He did, but poſ-"ſibly He might, and yet *Proculus* cure Him "in a natural Way," (P. 65.) I have offered my Reaſons to ſhew, why there is no Probability that this Cure was effected in a *natural* Way, and *Severus*'s own Opinion of it may be judged of by the Favour that it wrought in Him towards the *Chriſtians*. Had He thought that it was owing only to the *Skill* of the Man, and his Improvement in the *Medical Art*, his Reſpect would have been confined to the *Perſon* of the Man and not to the *Religion* which He profeſſed. But if He thought, that his Recovery was owing to a *Gift* peculiar to the People of this Profeſſion, (and the Method by which He was recovered of his Diſtemper, whatever it was, might eaſily induce Him to think ſo, and eſpecially after the Failure of the Attempts of Others) then this was a Reaſon for extending his Regard to the *Profeſſion* itſelf, and favouring, as far as He well could, All Thoſe of that Perſuaſion. For tho' the Fifth General Perſecution aroſe ſoon after the Beginning of his Reign, yet it was not by *his* Direction or Encouragement. He did not indeed interpoſe to forbid it, Reaſons of

State

State probably hindering Him from diſobliging his *Heathen* Subjects ſo far; but, as Opportunity ſerved, He viſibly favoured them, and by Example and Diſcourſe, tho' not by a publick Edict, He diſcouraged all Proſecution of them, and even recommended them to Regard and Eſteem. *Tertullian* tells Us, in the Paſſage immediately following this Account of *Proculus*, that the Emperor's Reſpect was not confined to the *Perſon* of his Benefactor, but that when He knew that ſeveral Perſons of Eminence of both Sexes were of this Perſuaſion, He not only refuſed to puniſh them for it, but even honoured them with his Applauſe, and openly checked the Fury of their Perſecutors. *Sed & clariſſimas Fœminas & clariſſimos Viros Severus ſciens hujus Secta eſſe, non modo non læſit, verum & Teſtimonio exornavit, & Populo furenti in os palam reſtitit.* And tho' the fore-mentioned Reaſons of State, and a Deſire of ingratiating Himſelf with his own People, induced Him afterwards to publiſh an Edict forbidding Any One to turn either *Jew* or *Chriſtian*, which occaſioned the Perſecution to revive and rage with greater Severity, yet it does not appear that He perſonally carried it on, but gave Way rather to the Zeal and Fury of Others, and was led by ſecular Motives into that *Inconſiſtency* too frequently viſible in

the

the World, of wanting *Reſolution* to maintain the Truth, tho' He did not want the *Judgment* to diſcern it. The Favour, which He actually did ſhew, when it was conſiſtent with his other Schemes, ſhews his Opinion of the *Cauſe*, for which *Proculus* was an Advocate, and of the *Power* by which He had wrought his Cure; and if this was wrought, as moſt probably it was, after the Attempts of his own People had proved unſucceſsful, He might well conſider this as a clear and deciſive Determination on which Side the Claim of ſupernatural Power truly lay: And This might be conſidered as a *real Competition*, tho' the Parties were not called to a formal Conteſt in his Preſence, like the Caſe alluded to in *Egypt*. "Mr. *T.* begs Leave to reject all the "miraculous Stories related of the Monk *Hi-*"*larion* in a Bundle." (P. 66.) If He does, I do not ſee that it affects the preſent Queſtion: Nor do I think that ſuch an indiſcriminate Method of rejecting all, without Examination, ſhews his Judgment. It is a Method that may be uſed with *true* Miracles as well as *falſe* ones.

The Caſe of the *Dæmoniacs* came next under Conſideration. I only obſerved that "the Inſinuations under this Head, would "hold as ſtrongly, if They were of any "Force, againſt the *Scriptural* Caſes, as

"againſt

"againſt others." Dr. *M.* had remarked, that what was called *Poſſeſſion* ſeemed by all the Symptoms and Circumſtances to be no other than the *Epilepſy*, which is juſt as true of the *Poſſeſſions* ſpoken of in the *Goſpels*. He added that "the Speeches and Confeſ-"ſions of the Devils, their anſwering to "all Queſtions, owning themſelves to be "Wicked Spirits, *&c.* may not improbably "be accounted for, either by the diſor-"dered State of the Patient, anſwering "wildly and at random to any Queſtions "propoſed, or by the Arts of Impoſture and "Contrivance between the Parties con-"cerned in the Act." Whether this is a probable Account, or not, the ſame Speeches and Confeſſions are recorded by the *Evangeliſts*, and theſe Solutions, ſuch as They are, will juſt as ſtrongly invalidate *their* Report as that of their *Succeſſors*. The Objections likewiſe from "their preconceived Notions "about the Origin and Power of Dæ-"mons," and from the "Readineſs of the "Leaders of all Sects and Parties to make "Uſe of a commodious Lie for the Ad-"vancement of what They call the Truth," were urged in the moſt *general* Manner, without the leaſt Diſtinction in Favour of the Inſpired Writers, and of their Operations, any more than of thoſe wrought and related

by

by the *Primitive Fathers*; and the very ſame Objections have been, and daily are raiſed againſt the former as well as againſt the latter. The Inſinuations concerning the falſe Pretences of *Jews* and *Gentiles*, the Eaſineſs by which Chriſtians were prejudiced and might be impoſed on, in Favour of their own Impoſtors, the Convenience of ſetting up one Cheat to oppoſe Another, the Facility with which ſtrange and ſurpriſing Feats might be performed by a Correſpondence between the *Ventriloquiſt* and the *Exorciſt*, All theſe *Poſſibilities*, however abſurd in themſelves, or inconſiſtent with each other, or repugnant to the plain Evidences of the Underſtanding and Integrity of the Relators, are as concluſive againſt the Credibility of the *earlier* as the *later* Dæmoniacs, and may juſt as well be made to overthrow the Belief, that there ever was any ſuch Poſſeſſion of Men by Devils, or Diſpoſſeſſion of them. The *Intention* of the Writer in ſuch a confuſed and undiſtinguiſhing Charge is out of the Queſtion, but as his Argument reaches ſo far, it was proper to ſhew the *Tendency* and *Extent* of it, and to obſerve that the Credit of *Scripture* was not ſafe upon theſe Suppoſitions. Thoſe excellent Writers, who undertook the Controverſy relating to the *Dæmoniacs* ſpo-

ken

ken of in the Goſpel, refuted all ſuch Evaſions, and by ſo doing, obviated the ſame in the like Caſes when reported by the Primitive Fathers. Mr. *T.* happens therefore to be extremely miſtaken, when He ſays, that "None of their Performances "can be of any Moment in the preſent Diſ-"pute." They have already ſet aſide all theſe Inſinuations, which would have been as concluſive againſt *all* Poſſeſſions as *any*, and have aſcertained the *Reality* of the *Diſtemper* and of the *Cure*, beyond all reaſonable Exception, upon the Authority of Thoſe who muſt be Judges of the Caſes They reported, and who would not have been Guilty of falſe Teſtimony. The very ſame Kind of Evidence recurs in the Teſtimony of the Primitive Fathers. The Caſe of *Poſſeſſions* is repreſented as ſo *common* as that They could not miſtake the Reality of it. They are All *unanimous* in the Atteſtation of it, and They would not, They could not have agreed in atteſting ſuch a Lie. Particular Caſes, which They related upon Report, They might be *miſinformed* in, but ſuch Inſtances ſhew how certain was the Thing itſelf, and ſuch fabulous Stories could not have prevailed, but upon the Credit which the many true Ones had raiſed. They appeal to *Enemies* as well as *Friends*; They chal-

lenge them to bring One, whom They knew to be poſſeſſed, and They would cure Him; and They remind them, that the Chriſtians had cured Thoſe, who had been found incurable by all Others. The Facts that They ſpeak of, They muſt know the Truth of, and They confirmed their *Veracity* by teſtifying it with their Blood. Mr. *T.* makes his Exception to this Caſe different from that of Dr. *M.* He has allowed, what I believe the Dr. would not allow, at leaſt what He has not yet allowed, that "when "our Saviour came upon Earth, God Al- "mighty did permit evil Spirits to enter in- "to the Bodies of Men." (P. 66.) He obſerves, that "our Saviour gave the Apoſ- "tles a Power to *caſt out Devils*, as diſtinct "from that of *Healing the Sick*, which, if "theſe Poſſeſſions had been only a Species "of Human Diſeaſes, there would have "been no Occaſion for Him to do." (P. 67.) This is certainly one good Reaſon, amongſt others, for this Opinion, and therefore the firſt and main Point is agreed on betwixt Us. The *Credibility* of the Miracle itſelf is not the Queſtion in Diſpute with Mr. *T.* whereas the whole Courſe of Dr. *M*'s Arguments appear to me to be levelled at *that*. Mr. *T.* adds what He thinks the probable Reaſon of ſuch a Permiſſion at that Time,

which

which was " to demonſtrate the ſupreme " Power of Chriſt over all the Orders of Be- " ings thro' the whole Extent of Nature." This likewiſe ſeems to be one good Reaſon amongſt others which might be aſſigned, for that Permiſſion, and moſt probably We do not ſee the Whole of the Grounds of that Diſpenſation of Providence. But Mr. *T.* ſays, that tho' " this is his Notion with Reſpect to " thoſe Poſſeſſions ſpoken of in the Goſpels, " yet He has not the ſame Authority to be- " lieve Thoſe of After-Ages, ſo much talked " of by the Fathers." He has not obliged Us with the Diſtinction, or ſhewn wherein the Teſtimony of the latter becomes any Way *ſuſpicious*. They ſpeak of the *ſame Sort of* Poſſeſſions, deſcribe them in the *ſame Manner*, preſcribe the *ſame Form of Cure* thro' the Name of Chriſt, repreſent them as the Occurrence of *daily* Experience, and as a Matter in which *All* might receive *immediate* Satisfaction. In ſhort, there could not poſſibly be one continued Scene of *Impoſture* thro' the whole Courſe of their Pretenſions, but They muſt *All* be Privy to it, and this Suppoſition is excluded by the *Unanimity* of their Teſtimony, and their Readineſs to ſuffer Martyrdom in Atteſtation of their Doctrines. Mr. *T.* adds, that " the whole End for which He " can conceive theſe Poſſeſſions were per-

" mitted, being anſwered by what was done " by our Saviour, and thoſe immediately " commiſſioned by Him, He ſees no Rea- " ſon for their Continuance." But neither does it appear, that the *whole* End, as deſcribed by Himſelf, was yet anſwered; nor would it follow, that becauſe Mr. *T.* does not ſee any Reaſon for their Continuance, therefore there was no Reaſon aſſignable; nor yet would it be a juſt Inference, if no good Reaſon could be aſſigned by Any, therefore the Fact was falſe. There may be Motives and Deſigns in the Schemes of Pro*vidence*, which We cannot ſee into, and our Ignorance of them is of no Force to overturn the Belief of a Diſpenſation confirmed by ſuch concurring and unexceptionable Teſtimony. But the whole End itſelf, as deſcribed by this Gentleman, does not ſeem to have been ſo far anſwered, as to exclude the Reaſon for the longer Continuance of theſe Poſſeſſions. He ſuppoſes it to be to " demonſtrate the Supreme " Power of Chriſt over all the Orders of Be- " ings, thro' the whole Extent of Nature." And was not This then better demonſtrated, if it continued till the Religion of Chriſt was eſtabliſhed on Earth? It is not pretended, that this Gift of *diſpoſſeſſing* was confined to the Perſon and Miniſtry of our Saviour Himſelf. If it had, This might have been interpreted

preted to demonſtrate *his Power alone* over thoſe infernal Agents. But it is allowed, that it was *delegated* to Thoſe, who were immediately commiſſioned by Him, and if their Exerciſe of it did, as undoubtedly it did, redound to the Honour of Him from whom they derived this Gift, and ſet forth his ſupreme Power and Authority, then certainly this End would be more effectually anſwered, if theſe Poſſeſſions, and the Cure of them, viſibly laſted, till the Dominion of *Satan* was rooted out, and the Bleſſed Goſpel eſtabliſhed in its Place. Some learned Men have thought, that the Power of the *Devils* in poſſeſſing the Bodies of Men at that Time, was permitted as a *Judgment*, in Puniſhment of the many Diabolical Arts then prevailing, ſuch as Magical Applications, heinous Immoralities, and groſs Idolatries. If This was the Caſe (and Who can ſay that it was not?) then it ſeems highly probable, that they ſhould continue till a true Faith, a right Worſhip, and a holy Practice were recovered to Mankind by the Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity. This ſeems again the more likely, inaſmuch as it does not appear by the Hiſtory of theſe *Dæmoniacs*, that Any but *Unbelievers* or *Wicked Chriſtians* were ſubject to theſe Poſſeſſions; Διαβεβαιώμεθα δὲ ἡμεῖς καὶ τῇ πείρᾳ παραλαβόντες, ὅτι οἱ κατὰ χριστιανισμὸν διὰ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ τὸν ἐπὶ πᾶσι θεραπεύοντες

 πεύοντες

πέυοντες θεὸν, καὶ ζῶντες κατὰ τὸ εὐαγγέλιον αὐτῷ ταις προσαχθεισαις δὲ εὐχαῖς συνεχέστερον καὶ δεόντως νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας χρώμενοι, ὥτε μαγείᾳ ὅτε δαιμονίοις εἰσιν ἀλωτοί. Orig. cont. Celſ. Lib. 6. Till Idolatry therefore was removed, at leaſt ſo far as not to be ſupported by the Civil Powers, there ſeems to be the ſame Reaſon for the Continuance of theſe Poſſeſſions, conſidered in a *judicial* Light. And as the *Cure* of them manifeſted the *ſuperior Power* of thatName by which they were cured, That End certainly was not ſo effectually anſwered, if they ceaſed ſo early, as that after all that had been yet done, the *Worſhip of Dæmons* ſtill continued triumphant, and upheld by all the Civil Powers of the Earth. If we join theſe Cauſes for the Frequency of Poſſeſſions in thoſe Days, as a *Puniſhment* on the Wickedneſs of Man, and as an Opportunity of *manifeſting the Authority* of the Eternal Son of God, who then came into the World, perhaps We are nearer the Truth, than by inſiſting on either ſeparately: But both theſe Reaſons would lead Us to preſume, that they laſted, till the Publick Profeſſion of the Goſpel had recommended the Profeſſors to the Favour of their Maker; and till the Victory of Chriſt over all the Powers of Hell was made viſible by the Publick Extirpation of all Idolatrous and Diabolical Worſhip.

But

But whether we *ſpeculate* right, or not, concerning the *true Ends* of that Diſpenſation, yet We may be ſure that Mr. *T*'s Account is not right, that "the whole End, for which thoſe "Poſſeſſions were permitted, was anſwered "by what was done by our Saviour and thoſe "immediately commiſſioned by Him." We have unanſwerable Evidence, that this *ſupernatural* Cure of them continued farther than this Limitation of them. Our Saviour Himſelf, juſt when He was on the Point of leaving the Earth, and after He had given all the Commiſſions which were given *immediately* by *Himſelf*, goes on to promiſe this as the *future* Privilege of thoſe, who ſhould believe on his Name, that *in his Name They ſhould caſt out Devils*, &c. Mark xvi. 17. He had conferred this Privilege in his Life-Time on his Apoſtles, and on the Seventy Diſciples, when He ſent them out to preach in his Name, and He now *extends* the Grant, and promiſes that the ſame Gift ſhould *hereafter* attend on Thoſe who ſhould believe on Him. This was carrying it beyond thoſe, who had the Honour of his immediate Commiſſion; but ſtill the Honour *ultimately* redounded to his Name, in which alone, by whatever Inſtruments, theſe ſupernatural Cures were wrought: And as We have this Evidence, that this Gift continued beyond the Apoſtles themſelves, and as

all the imaginable Reaſons for it ſtill continued, during the Prevalence of that groſs Idolatry, it may reaſonably be preſumed, that it did continue till the Name of Chriſt was *hallowed* by the *National* Profeſſion of it, and his Religion became the Religion of Rulers.

Mr. *T.* goes on to raiſe a Suſpicion, from a Circumſtance, which is to me a Confirmation of their Pretenſions, as being moſt agreeable to the Reaſon of the Thing, the Account of Scripture, and the Glory of God thro' *Jeſus Chriſt*; which is declared to be the End of all the Diſpenſations of Providence, and is preſcribed as the ultimate End of all our Actions and Deſigns. He obſerves, that all the Primitive Chriſtians laid the great Streſs on this Point, and challenged their Adverſaries to be Witneſſes, not to their raiſing the Dead, or reſtoring a Cripple to the immediate Uſe of his Limbs, but to their diſpoſſeſſing a Dæmoniac. "All their Boaſtings, ſays He, terminate in this Point, Bring Us a Perſon poſſeſſed with a Devil, and you ſhall preſently ſee any common Chriſtian command Him out." He obſerves that in another Caſe the not raiſing a Perſon from the Dead, on the Demand of a Heathen, was accounted for by the *Want of a ſpecial Impulſe* to work that Miracle; (tho' He knows that That was not the only Method offered of accounting for it, but

was

was urged particularly to Dr. *M.* on his own Principles) but that "in the Caſe before Us, "the Parties are repreſented as ready to ex-"pel Devils, every Day of the Week, or "every Hour of the Day," and then wonders what ſhould make this Difference. If *Wondering* was of any Service in the Courſe of an Argument, I would wonder in my Turn, how a ſerious and attentive Peruſer of the Scripture could make a Difficulty of this, or be at a Loſs to ſee the Reaſon of this Difference; much more how He could make it the Foundation of any Objection. It is obſervable that our Bleſſed Lord, when He ſent out the Apoſtles to preach in his Life-Time, and again, when He was renewing the Commiſſion to them to preach the Goſpel, juſt before his Aſcenſion, does in both Places, amongſt other Privileges, make particular Mention of this. He varies the other Inſtances, in which They ſhould be enabled to work Miracles, but as if on Purpoſe to diſtinguiſh this, as that which was on no Account to be omitted, He ſpecifies the *caſting out Devils* in both thoſe Catalogues of ſupernatural Gifts. There is not any other repeated in thoſe Accounts (except where the Appointment of a *peculiar Form* in the Performance occaſioned the Repetition) but this Gift alone ſtands thus diſtinguiſhed, cloſing the former and beginning

ning the latter Liſt of extraordinary Endowments, *Mat.* x. 8.—*Mark* xvi. 17. Now why this Diſtinction? Why this peculiar Streſs laid on this Gift? Let Us learn, if We can, from the firſt Diſciples of Chriſt, thoſe immediately commiſſioned by Him. Our Lord on another Occaſion, diſtinct from that before mentioned, *appointed other Seventy alſo, and ſent them two and two before his Face into Every City and Place whither He Himſelf would come*, Luke x. 1. He commiſſions them to foretell his Approach, and prepare his Way, and the only *Extraordinary* Endowment, which the Evangeliſt has expreſſly recorded as then beſtowed on them is, that of *healing the Sick*, v. 9. under which, as appears by the Event, the diſpoſſeſſing of *Dæmoniacs* was included. Let Us hear now the Anſwer of the *Seventy*, when They returned with Joy on the ſucceſsful Execution of their Commiſſion. They do not ſay, "*Lord, We have raiſed the Dead, or We* "*have reſtored Cripples to the Uſe of their* "*Limbs:*" But *Lord, even the Devils are* "*ſubject unto us thro' thy Name*," v. 17. This They thought to be the *greateſt* Miracle in itſelf, or the *moſt to the Honour* of their Maſter; and in which ever Light We take it, it will, I hope, be no Reflection on their Succeſſors, that They followed this Example, and laid the Streſs on the ſame ſupernatural Event.

Our

Our Lord accepts and confirms their Report, by referring to the firſt Fall of the Prince of thoſe Dæmons that They ſpoke of, when He, the Eternal Son, was the Author of and Witneſs to his Confuſion and Dejection; *I beheld Satan as Lightning fall from Heaven:* Or if this be interpreted rather as a Prophetic View of his ſpeedy Fall, by the future Succeſs of the Goſpel, from that Adoration and thoſe Divine Honours, which were then paid to Him, ſtill the Argument is the ſame; and the Reaſon of dwelling particularly on the Power of *ejecting Devils* in the Name of *Chriſt*, appears in the fulleſt Light as tending moſt immediately to the Glory of the Redeemer. Thus the Diſciples, in the forecited Triumph, expreſſly aſcribe the great Event to the Powerful Name of their Maſter. Other Miracles only ſhewed his Power over the Works of Nature, which might have been a *delegated* Power, but this directly ſhewed his *inherent* Power and Authority over the higheſt Orders of created Beings, who were forced to *tremble* at the Name of Him that made them, and were compelled not only to quit their Station at his Command, but to confeſs his Sovereign Authority, and to bear Witneſs to his Power in *expreſs Words* as well as *ſubmiſſive Deeds*. The Power of the Devils over the Bodies of Men at that Time may properly be deemed ſupernatural;

natural; and therefore a Power ſtill ſuperior to theirs, reſtraining and removing them, and extorting from them a Confeſſion of their Nature and Subjection, might well be conſidered as the moſt conſiderable Miracle itſelf, and as ſuch be moſt frequently propoſed for the Conviction of Mankind.

Another Reaſon for ſingling out this Miracle from the Reſt might be on Purpoſe to detect the vain Pretenſions of the Heathens in this very Reſpect, and to force them to a Competition, which could ſcarce fail of ending in the Satisfaction of every impartial Enquirer. Dr. *M.* ſays, that "All the Fathers, who lay ſo "great a Streſs on this particular Gift of caſting "out Devils, yet allow the ſame Power "both to the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, as well "before as after our Saviour's Coming." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 84.) In Proof of this of the Fathers, He has only cited *Juſtin Martyr* and *Origen* as ſaying, that *the Devils would ſubmit to the Name of the God of* Abraham. But to the former He has not done Juſtice herein. Dr. *M.* with good Reaſon dropped this Part in his *Greek* Citation, that it might not be obſerved with what Caution *Juſtin* ſpake on this Subject. He ſaid ἴσως ὑποταγήσεται---*They would perhaps ſubmit*---which Dr. *M.* by his Tranſlation turned into a poſitive Aſſertion. What *Origen* ſays indeed is more expreſs,

expreſs, and might be true in ſome particular Inſtances, and yet even this appears by thoſe Teſtimonies to have been related upon *Report*. But Nothing can be more plain than that the Fathers did not allow this Power to be the Privilege of the *Heathen Exorciſts*; on the contrary, They inſiſt that *Chriſtians* diſpoſſeſſed Thoſe who had failed of Help from all other Pretenders. *Tertullian* in particular repreſents the Whole as Colluſion, as the Art of the *Dæmons* Themſelves to give Countenance to Magic and Sorcery; not that the Exorciſts had really any Power over the Devils, but that thoſe Evil Spirits themſelves taught ſecret Rites, and then withdrew upon the Exerciſe of them, on Purpoſe to raiſe the Credit of thoſe Impoſtors, and thereby to promote Superſtition and Idolatry in the World. *Lædunt enim primo, dehinc Remedia præcipiunt ad Miraculum nova, ſive contraria, poſt quæ deſinunt lædere, & curaſſe creduntur.* Apol. C. 22. The Intelligence of much leſs ſubtle Beings might be capable of this Management, and in this Situation No Claim could be urged with ſo much Propriety by the Chriſtians, as This of *diſpoſſeſſing* the Devils, and forcing them to own themſelves ſuch. The Pretenſions to other Miracles might be evaded or ballanced by Thoſe *Exorciſts*, who claimed this Power of ejecting Dæmons,

but

but when their Claim was invalidated at the ſame Time, and in the ſame Method by which the ſuperior Power and Authority of the Chriſtians was teſtified, This carried the ſtrongeſt Force of Argument poſſible, and was peculiarly fitted for the Converſion of thoſe Heathens. The Apologiſts with one Voice repreſent this Matter in this Light. They tell their Adverſaries, that the Objects of their Worſhip ſhould, at an Injunction given in the Name of *Jeſus*, own themſelves to be *Devils*, not only *Creatures*, but *impotent* and *wicked Creatures*, unable to ſtand before even the Servants of Chriſt. Now to thoſe idolatrous Worſhippers of Devils, What Argument could be in any Degree ſo proper as This? What Miracle could be of half that Force, or on that Account be ſo fit to be the Subject of a conſtant Claim as This, which ſtruck at the very Root of their Worſhip, and ſhewed them not only the *Power* of the *Name of Chriſt*, but the *deteſtable* Nature, and *abject* State of thoſe Beings, which as yet They had adored?

A farther Reaſon, why this of *diſpoſſeſſing Devils* was the conſtant Challenge and Foundation of Triumph with the Primitive Chriſtians, may with great Probability be taken from the *Nature* of the Caſe, the *frequent Opportunity* which was offered them of exerciſing

ercising this Talent, and the great Benefit which thereby redounded to the most distressed Part of Mankind. Mr. *T.* asks, "Why should it be more in their Power "to drive out a Devil at a Moment's "Warning, than to raise the Dead at a "Moment's Warning?" (P. 69.) The Mention of these two Cases points to a plain Difference, which 'tis most likely was the real Cause. It was in *all* Instances proper to assist and relieve Those who were thus unhappily possessed, when they were called on by their Adversaries; but it could not by any Means be proper, that *All* who *died* should be *raised again*, whenever Unbelievers were pleased to demand it. This was a Gift, which could not be supposed to be given promiscuously, or to be exerted indiscriminately; The Character and Situation of the Person to be restored, was much to be considered in a Miracle of that Nature: Or if in One, or a Few Instances, the Conversion of Heathens only was regarded, yet it would be morally impossible that such a Gift could be a *frequent*, much less a *standing* one, because it would have perpetuated that Generation, and would in many Respects have been inconsistent with the other Designs of Providence. The Time at which Men are called out of Life is One of the

most

moſt immediate Acts of our Maker and Preſerver, and is attended with the moſt important Conſequences, not to be reverſed without a particular Commiſſion and Direction. This was certainly a Caſe, if any, which needed a *ſpecial Impulſe*, and was not to be undertaken in general, at all Events, without Reſpect to Perſons, and Times, and other Circumſtances. The ſame may be ſaid of *healing* thoſe Diſeaſes, which lead to Death, which could not in all Caſes be proper for the ſame Reaſons; whereas whilſt ſuch Poſſeſſions were permitted, they might, without any like Inconveniences, be removed at any Time; and if they were then permitted on Purpoſe to demonſtrate the ſupreme Power of Chriſt over all the Orders of Beings, then the more frequently the afflicted Perſons were relieved, the more frequently was that Power manifeſted: And the very Nature of this Gift furniſhes Us with a Reaſon, why this in particular ſhould be offered to Examination every Day of the Week, or every Hour of the Day.

One farther Reaſon may ſtill be aſſigned why This of *diſpoſſeſſing Devils*, was the ſtanding Challenge of the firſt Chriſtians, becauſe This alone ſeems to have been the *common Privilege* of all Chriſtians at that Time. It was not only a Gift very proper to be exerted at all Times, but it is deſcribed as capable

pable of being exerted by every the meaneſt Believer. It appears like the Privilege of their Baptiſm, for the *Name of Chriſt* pronounced by Any One, that was *fœderally* related to Him, was ſufficient to make the Devils quit their Station, and own the Authority of that powerful Name. Thus the Fathers repreſent it, and particularly take Notice, that any common Chriſtian was able to perform this, and would undertake it at the Hazard of his Life. It was of this Office eſpecially that *Origen* obſerved, that *it was performed generally by Private Perſons*, not intending certainly to *exclude* Others from the ſame Power, but becauſe a Gift, common to All, was left to be exerciſed by the Meaneſt Believer, as in them, unaſſiſted by any outward Advantage, the Grace of God would ſhine moſt conſpicuouſly; and *Origen* Himſelf, in the Paſſage referred to, goes on expreſſly to aſſign this Reaſon for it. This Account of this being the only *univerſal* Gift, and therefore the only one univerſally claimed, is remarkably confirmed by what St. *Paul* has ſaid on the Subject of extraordinary Endowments in the 12th Ch. of his firſt Ep. to the *Cor.* He there ſpeaks of the Variety with which they were diſpenſed to different Perſons, Some to One, and Some to Another. He recounts every particular Gift (except this one of diſpoſſeſſing Devils) and

ſays that they were given ſeparately to *Some*, but not to *All*. Now why was this one particular Gift omitted, but becauſe it was not true of this, as it was of all the reſt, that it was confined to particular Perſons? We have ſeen already, that it was a Gift of too much Importance to be paſſed over in Silence, and that there can be no Reaſon to ſuppoſe that it ceaſed ſo early; and therefore no Account can be given, why the Apoſtle, who was ſo minute in enumerating every other particular Gift, ſhould take no Notice at all of this; but only that *this* was not *appropriated*, like the *others*, to any diſtinguiſhed Saints in *Excluſion* of their Brethren, but was the common Glory of every Profeſſor of Chriſtianity. *By one Spirit*, as the Apoſtle ſays in the ſame Chapter, *They were All baptized into One Body, and were All made to drink into one Spirit*, v. 13. and this Spirit, which was the Gift of the Church, and of every Member of it, was ſufficient to put to Flight the Evil Spirits, and to extort from them the Acknowledgement of their Nature and Condition.

If then a Gift, which more immediately tended to the Honour of their Redeemer's Name, and on which particular Streſs is laid in Scripture, both by our *Saviour* and his *Firſt Diſciples*; if a Gift, which in the Nature of it beſt confounded the vain Pretenſions

of

of the Heathens, and overthrew the Foundation of their Worſhip; if a Gift, which in the Benefit of it to Mankind, and its Serviceableneſs to the Glory of God, was at all Times proper to be exerted, without interfering with the other Deſigns of Providence, but promoting the very End aſſigned for the Permiſſion of ſuch Poſſeſſions; if Laſtly, a Gift, which was the moſt unconfined and general, and the common Lot of every baptized Perſon, if This was the conſtant Subject of Claim and Triumph amongſt the Primitive Chriſtians, It will, I truſt, yield no reaſonable Cauſe of *Suſpicion*, but will rather ſhew, that They underſtood the Nature and Uſe of the Endowments that They were bleſſed with, and made a wiſe and proper Application of them.

On the Caſe of *Prophetic Viſions* I had obſerved, that This, by Dr. *M*'s own Confeſſion, was the leaſt to the Purpoſe of any; "Gifts," ſays the Dr. "of this Sort were "merely Perſonal, and do not therefore in any "Manner affect or relate to the Queſtion now "before Us." Whether therefore theſe were proved or diſproved, was not material according to his Account; and ſo They were paſſed over with this Remark, that there was little more than Dr. *M*'s Suſpicions to prove any of them to be *falſe*, much leſs to be *deſigned*

Frauds. This Diſtinction ſeemed proper, for Thoſe Stories which They related upon *Report*, They might be *miſtaken* in, without any Impeachment of their *Veracity*, which only could hurt the Credit of their Teſtimony in thoſe Matters which They reported upon their own Knowlege. And as to thoſe Viſions which They atteſt as made to Themſelves, there is Nothing objected to them, but what might equally have been objected, if they were never ſo true, and therefore cannot prove them to be otherwiſe. Mr. *T.* however takes one Gift in particular into Conſideration, becauſe He did not find that Dr. *M.* entered at all into the Diſcuſſion of it. It relates to *the Diſcovery of Mens Hearts*, as given to ſome in the Primitive Church, which He thinks not credible, becauſe "it was not vouchſafed to "the Apoſtles themſelves," but was, as He repreſents it, peculiar to our Saviour, and "no weak Argument of his Divinity." He obſerves that "there is Nothing of this Na-"ture in the Commiſſion where their other "Powers are ſeverally delegated to them, "and where We might expect to have found "this alſo inſerted, had it been intended for "them." If the Gentleman means that Commiſſion in the forecited Paſſage of St. *Mark* xvi. 17, 18. then I ſay it is certain, that They had ſome other extraordinary Gifts, beſides

thoſe

thoſe which are particularly ſpecified in that Liſt; They had ſome other diſtinct Powers given them when they were firſt ſent out to preach, *Mat.* x. 8. which no Doubt were now continued to them. If He means, that *thoſe* ſhould be preſuppoſed, and added to *theſe*, to compleat the Liſt of the Powers annexed to their Commiſſion, then I ſay farther, that it is certain that They had ſtill *other* Powers, which were not enumerated in either of thoſe Catalogues. St. *Paul* in his 1ſt Ep. to the *Corinthians* reckoning up the many extraordinary Endowments variouſly diſtributed at that Time, takes Notice of ſome, which were not particularly mentioned by our Saviour in either of thoſe forecited Paſſages: So that it is no Argument that the Apoſtles had not this Gift, merely becauſe it was not peculiarly expreſſed in their Commiſſion. If it appears from any other Part of Scripture that They were favoured with it, it will be no Objection that it is not mentioned in that Part. But it ſeems to be Mr. *T*'s Endeavour to prove that it is not mentioned any where. It is plain, He ſays, that the Apoſtles had not this Gift, when they proceeded to the Choice of a Fellow-Apoſtle by Lot, and prayed to God as the only Searcher of Hearts, to direct the Event. This however is very little to the Purpoſe, becauſe it was *before* the Deſcent of the

Holy Ghoſt upon them, who was to fulfil the Promiſes made unto them, to be the Principle of all *extraordinary* Endowments in them, and particularly of ſuch an one, as ſhould enable them to diſcover the Hearts of Others. "What looks moſt like this, He ſays, is the "Story of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*; but as an "Eſtate cannot be bought and ſold, without "ſeveral Parties being privy to it, it is not "unreaſonable to ſuppoſe, that St. *Peter* "might come at the Truth of the Matter "without any Revelation more than was na-"tural." This is barely *poſſible*, but extreme-ly *improbable*, and from the Circumſtances of the Caſe it ſeems very *unreaſonable* to ſuppoſe it. As They *intended* this Fraud, They would certainly be as *ſecret* as poſſible in concealing the Terms of the Sale; As the Purchaſers were *Unbelievers*, it was not likely St. *Peter* ſhould have Intelligence from *them*; and the very *Manner*, in which He reproves the Criminals, intimates the Method in which their Crime was diſcovered, in that They had dared to attempt to impoſe upon the *Bleſſed Spirit*, who could not be impoſed upon, and who had now brought to Light the ſecret Purpoſes of their Heart. *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie to the Holy Ghoſt?* ſays the Apoſtle to *Ananias*,---*Thou haſt not lied unto Men but unto God.* And again to *Sapphira*, *How is*

it

it that Ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? This ſeems pointed to ſhew the *Folly* as well as *Wickedneſs* of attempting to impoſe upon *Omniſcience*, which could ſo eaſily exhibit the moſt private Frauds to publick View, and bring the Authors of them to Confuſion and Puniſhment. The ſame Power, which could *detect*, could *puniſh* them, and the extraordinary Act of Diſcipline enſuing was a Proof of the extraordinary Method in which the Crime was diſcovered. This Caſe was ſo plain, that this is the firſt Time that it has been miſtaken, or that an Attempt has been made to evade the Miracle of the Diſcovery by a Suggeſtion of St. *Peter*'s ſecret Intelligence. There is another Inſtance, I think, of the ſame Gift exerciſed by the ſame Apoſtle, as recorded in the 8th Ch. of the *Acts*, in Relation to the Caſe of *Simon Magus*. He had profeſſed Repentance and Faith, and had been admitted into the Church *by Baptiſm*; but on ſeeing the *extraordinary Gifts* of the Holy Ghoſt conferred by the Laying on of the *Hands* of the Apoſtles, He offered them Money to be endowed with the ſame Privilege. St. *Peter* not only reproves Him for the Error of *thinking that the Gift of God might be purchaſed with Money*, but goes on to tell Him, that He knew more of Him than perhaps He knew of Himſelf: He tells Him, that *his Heart was*

not right in the Sight of God. He directs to Repentance and Prayer, that if his Offence was not yet beyond the Reach of Pardon, He might obtain it. *For I perceive,* ſays He, the Original is ὁρῶ, I ſee *that Thou art in the Gall of Bitterneſs, and in the Bond of Iniquity.* This was more than appeared merely from the Overt-Act which occaſioned the Remark, which might poſſibly have been a Miſtake in Judgment, and not the Effect of ſo corrupt a Heart; but St. *Peter* was now enabled to diſcern the Secret Workings of his Mind, and to lay them open for the Publick Good, as *Irenæus* expreſſes it. Theſe Inſtances would be the more readily allowed, if there was any Mention of ſuch a Gift in any other Enumeration of extraordinary Endowments in any other Part of Scripture. Mr. *T.* ſeems to take it for granted that there is not; whereas I think, and the Generality of Commentators have always thought, that this Gift is expreſſly mentioned by St. *Paul* amongſt other ſupernatural Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt. After the Mention of ſome other Endowments beſtowed ſeparately, the Apoſtle adds, *To Another the Working of Miracles, to Another Prophecy, to Another Diſcerning of Spirits, to Another diverſe Kinds of Tongues, to Another the Interpretation of Tongues,* 1 Cor. xii. 10. *Irenæus*'s Teſtimony cited on this Occaſion ſeems

to

to be a *Comment* on, or rather a *Tranſcript* of this very Text. "We hear Many in the "Church indued with Prophetic Gifts; "ſpeaking with all Kinds of Tongues; lay-"ing open the Secrets of Men for the "Publick Good, and expounding the Myſte-"ries of God." However the *Diſcerning of Spirits* ſpoken of by St. *Paul* is plainly ranked by Him in the midſt of ſupernatural Gifts, and cannot therefore be interpreted away by thoſe Precepts which direct a *Trial of Spirits*, by the Analogy of Faith, or the actual Effects of Holineſs and Virtue. This *Diſcerning of Spirits* is not only by the moſt obvious Senſe of the *Expreſſion*, but by the *Context* limited to ſome extraordinary Method of looking into the Hearts and Deſigns of Men. In this Senſe may likewiſe very rationally be interpreted that difficult *Text*, 1 Cor. xiv. 32. that *the Spirits of the Prophets are ſubject to the Prophets*; Meaning that the Deſigns of Thoſe who made Pretenſions to extraordinary Illumination, were by the Aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt made known to Others, who were really ſo endued, by which Means Impoſtors might be detected, and genuine Claims be confirmed and made more uſeful. This appears farther from thoſe Paſſages, wherein *Timothy* is ſaid to be ſet apart for the Miniſtry *ac-*

cording

cording to the Prophecies which went before on Him, 1 Tim. i. 18, and iv. 14, that is according to the Deſignation of Thoſe, who by this Gift had declared Him a proper Perſon for this Office. *Clemens Alex.* adds, that St. *John* ordained ſuch to the Care of the *Aſiatick* Churches as were pointed out to Him by the Spirit. (Ep. *Euſeb.* Lib. III. C. 23.) There are other Inſtances of the like Kind in Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, and theſe are recorded Proofs of the Exerciſe of this Gift, whereby Mens Hearts and true Characters were laid open for the Publick Good. But Mr. *T.* has an Objection from the *Nature of the Thing* as well as from what He deems the *Omiſſion* of it in the Sacred Hiſtory. "My "Reaſon, ſays He, I confeſs, ſuch as it is, "leads me to believe, that God has always "reſerved this Point of Knowledge to Him-"ſelf. Man could never arrive at it by his "own natural Abilities, and I meet with no "certain Monument that it was ever com-"municated to Man." (P. 71.) That no Man could ſee into Another's Heart by the Strength of his own *natural* Abilities, will be moſt readily allowed, but the Knowledge of Another's Intentions was never communicated to Any Perſon by *extraordinary Revelation,* is a very extraordinary Diſcovery. We have many Monuments of this in the in-

ſpired

ſpired Writings. When God Almighty directed *Joſeph* to flee into *Egypt with the Holy Child Jeſus*, adding the Reaſon, that *Herod would ſeek the Young Child to deſtroy Him*, *Joſeph* may then well be ſaid to have *known* Herod's *Heart*; and whether this Knowlege was communicated by the *Appearance of an Angel* in a Dream, or by a more ſecret and *immediate*, but ſure and well-known *Suggeſtion of the Holy Spirit* to his Spirit, makes no Difference in the Caſe. The Reſult would either Way be juſt the ſame. The Knowlege in both Caſes would be by Revelation; The Gift would be ſupernatural, and the Event would be the Diſcovery of the Perſecutor's Intention. In like Manner We may underſtand the Gift of *diſcerning Spirits* in the Primitive Church: Not that One Perſon had by a Kind of *Intuition*, a Knowlege of all that paſſed in Another's Breaſt; but that the Secrets of that Other were ſometimes communicated by Revelation, in Caſes where the Diſcovery of their great *Purity* or great *Malignity* concerned the Publick Good. Thus We may ſuppoſe, in the Inſtance before ſpoken of, that St. *Peter* knew not the vile Hypocriſy of *Simon Magus*, when He admitted Him to *Baptiſm*: But when He continued to carry on the ſame baſe Deſigns under the Profeſſion of the

the Goſpel, ſuch a publick Diſcovery by Revelation of the *Naughtineſs of his Heart*, might be uſeful and proper, and might therefore be then communicated to the Apoſtle. The *occaſional, ſpecial Impulſe* maintained by Dr. *M.* may here at leaſt be preſumed to be the Truth of the Caſe, and is a Suppoſition that will ſolve all Difficulties relating to it. Mr. *T.* allows that "Nothing "can be clearer than that our Saviour was "poſſeſſed of this Gift in the fulleſt Man-"ner, which, ſays He, I really look upon "as no weak Argument of his Divinity." Far be it from me to weaken any Argument which eſtabliſhes that great, that important Truth; but I think the Scripture itſelf furniſhes us with a plain Diſtinction, which will ſecure the peculiar Right of our Saviour to this extraordinary Talent of ſeeing into Mens Hearts, and the Argument thence ariſing for the Belief of his Divinity, without proving that it never was communicated in any Degree, or in any Inſtance to Others.

Jeſus, ſays the inſpired Writer, *knew all Men*, (no other ever pretended to that) *and needed not that Any, ſhould teſtify of Man, for He knew what was in Man*, John ii. 24, 25. This was his peculiar Prerogative. He had this Talent *underived*, by Virtue of his own Nature and Attributes, and therefore it extended

tended to all Perſons and Times, and He ſtood in no Need of any Teſtimony whatſoever; and This I perfectly agree with Mr. *T.* is an undoubted Proof of his true and real Divinity. All Others, in order to gain a certain Information, do ſtand in Need that Some *One ſhould teſtify of Man*, and as No One can ſee the Heart of Man, but the *Omniſcient Spirit*, which ſeeth all things, therefore without the particular Teſtimony of the Holy Spirit, no *infallible* Determination can be obtained. But with his immediate Aſſiſtance ſuch Knowlege may be communicated, and on this Account This *diſcerning of Spirits* is properly repreſented as One of the *extraordinary* Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt. The Son of God, from whom with the Father proceedeth the Holy Spirit, had this omniſcient Faculty in his own Right, and in its full Extent. When Men were favoured with it, it was in particular Caſes, and that by *Communication*, and that *ſupernatural*; and it appears from Scripture, that Some were ſometimes ſo favoured. Mr. *T*'s Reaſonings on the Primitive Fathers claiming a Gift, which the Apoſtles had not, fall of Courſe on the Diſcovery of the Miſtake of the Principle on which He argued.

On the Gift of expounding the Scriptures I had obſerved that Dr. *M.* had advanced

Nothing

Nothing but what had been ſaid before; "And which, ſays Mr. *T.* I flatter Myſelf "theſe Papers have already ſhewn to be "very *inſufficiently* anſwered." Self-Flattery certainly will go a great Way; I ſhall leave Him to enjoy his own good Opinion, and ſhall leave the Deciſion of that Point to the Publick. Mr. *T.* adds, "Some freſh "Particulars however We do find here ad-"vanced." For my Part I do not find them. The only Remark under this Head tending to diſprove that the Fathers claimed this Gift, is the Repetition of that Paſſage in *Juſtin Martyr*, which was before examined. The general Inſinuations concerning the Influence of Craft, or Enthuſiaſm, or Prejudice, and the Story of Biſhop *Fiſher*, have no more Relation to the Gift of expounding the Scriptures, than to any other Part of the Book. Mr. *T.* gives another Reaſon for paſſing over theſe. "We will forbear, "ſays He, adding a farther Weight, till "that already on is removed." If this was the only Cauſe of his Forbearance, He need not have been ſo ſparing and ſcrupulous.

The *Gift of Tongues* is the Laſt propoſed to our Conſideration. Mr. *T.* begins with Dr. *M*'s concluding Remark, that the whole Credit of this depends on the ſingle Autho-

rity

rity of *Irenæus*. But if his Authority be good, if He ſtand as an unexceptionable Witneſs, this Circumſtance alone will not invalidate his Teſtimony. It is to be conſidered in Conjunction with this Evidence, that our Saviour foretold it, that it ſubſiſted in the Age juſt before, that the ſame Reaſons ſubſiſted for the Continuance of it; and theſe Circumſtances concur to render the Teſtimony of *Irenæus* highly credible. That Other Primitive Writers have not inſiſted on it, is no more an Objection to Him that has mentioned it, than it is againſt St. *Paul*'s Evidence, that the other Writers of the Epiſtles in the New Teſtament have not taken Notice of this Gift in particular, or of the Continuance of Miracles in general. Neither will the Inference hold certain, that *this Gift vaniſhed of a ſudden*, becauſe the Inſtances are not recorded of the Times, and Places, and Perſons, in and by whom it was exerted. The ſame Argument would be of as much Force againſt the Uſe of it by the Apoſtles Themſelves, becauſe their Travels, and their Application of this Talent to the Converſion of all Nations, are not particularly tranſmitted to Us. But Dr. *M*'s principal Objection to the Evidence of this Gift was this, that *Irenæus*, who was the only One that mentioned it, "appear-

"ed

"ed to be in great Want of it Himſelf "for the Propagation of the Goſpel in his "own Dioceſe among the *Celtæ* or *Gauls*." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 119.) It might be preſumed that this was a proper Occaſion for the Exerciſe of ſuch a Gift, and therefore this looked like a plauſible Objection; for if *Irenæus* Himſelf wanted it, where it would be particularly uſeful, this would be thought a Preſumption againſt its Continuance any where. To prove that *Irenæus* was thus deſtitute of this Gift, Dr. *M.* refers to Dr. *Cave*'s Interpretation of a Paſſage in that Author, as if He had complained, that *it was not the leaſt Part of his Trouble, that He was forced to learn the Language of the Country; a rude and barbarous Dialect, before He could do any Good upon them.* I therefore took the Paſſage referred to at large into Conſideration, and ſhewed that there was not the leaſt Reference to any Trouble, or Difficulty, or Loſs of Time, in his learning the Dialect, but that He ſpoke only of the *Nature* of the Language itſelf, and not of the *Manner* of his attaining it: For that what He ſaid, was juſt as true, and as applicable to the Suppoſition of his having it by *ſupernatural* Infuſion as by *natural* Application. But Mr. *T.* ſays, that my Tranſlation of the Paſſage does not

ſhew

ſhew this, nay, that it fully confirms and eſtabliſhes the Dr's Argument. " But You " will not, ſays *Irenæus*, expect from Us " who reſide among the *Gauls*, and are " chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect, " any artificial Compoſition of Words which " We have not learned, &c."—" In what " Manner, ſays Mr. *T.* could He have ex- " preſſed Himſelf to make it plainer that " He had learnt the *Celtick* Language in " ſome Degree, but not to Perfection; not " ſo as to be able to frame in it an ar- " tificial Compoſition of Words?"—The Words *in it* are an Addition of Mr. *T*'s, not to be found either in the Original, or in Dr. *M*'s Tranſlation, It is an Addition which the Senſe will not, cannot bear; becauſe *Irenæus* was not writing *in it*, in the *Celtick* Language, but in *Greek*. This therefore can have no Relation to his greater or leſs Knowledge of that Language, which in its higheſt Perfection He repreſents as barbarous; and obſerves that the habitual Uſe of ſuch Dialect, where He reſided, muſt preclude any Expectation from Him of *Elegance*, or *Accuracy* in any Language.

But Mr. *T.* has a more extraordinary Objection ſtill. He ſays, " No Dialect can " with any Propriety be ſaid to be bar- " barous in Reſpect to the Holy Ghoſt, to

" whom all Dialects are equally eaſy, and " perhaps equally ſmooth and harmonious." Upon this Principle there was no Difference of *Purity* or *Corruption* in all thoſe Tongues and Languages, which were ſupernaturally infuſed on the *Day of Pentecoſt*, becauſe they were all derived from the Holy Ghoſt. But I preſume, that if a Dialect was really barbarous in itſelf, or in Compariſon with other Languages, the Attainment of it by *Inſpiration* inſtead of *hard Study*, did not make it otherwiſe. If ſuch a Gift was given to enable a Miſſionary to preach the Goſpel to People of a foreign Country, it muſt be given juſt in the Manner in which They uſed it; and if theirs was a barbarous and unpoliſhed Language, it muſt be the very ſame in the Preacher to qualify Him to do Good among them. If the Holy Ghoſt by communicating it had refined and improved it, it would have been ſo much the leſs uſeful to the unimproved People amongſt whom it was to be uſed, and the Alteration of the Dialect would have made it a *new and unknown Language* to them. There is therefore no Impropriety in talking of a *barbarous Dialect*, though it be ſuppoſed to be infuſed by the *Holy Spirit*, ſince on that Suppoſition it muſt be conformable to the Speech of the intended Converts;

verts; and the *Nature* of the Language would not be at all affected by the *Manner* of communicating it. Upon the Whole; there is not the leaſt Intimation in Any Thing that *Irenæus* has ſaid, that He was put to any Trouble, or loſt any Time, in learning the Language of the *Celtæ* or *Gauls* before He could do any Good upon them, as Dr. *M.* repreſents it. What He ſays is, that Elegance and Oratory were not to be expected from Him, becauſe He was forced chiefly to uſe a Language which did not admit of them; and ſuch cuſtomary Uſe of a barbarous Dialect might probably debaſe his Style, which He did not take Pains to mend, having Nothing in View but Truth and Perſpicuity. This is the Subſtance of his Apology for his Style, which was juſt as proper and rational, if the Knowlege of that Language was communicated to Him *ſupernaturally*, as if it was attained by *Study* and Application. Dr. *M.* had obſerved farther, that, " it was not credible, that a Gift " of ſuch eminent Uſe ſhould entirely ceaſe, " while all the Reſt were ſubſiſting in full " Vigour." I anſwered in the firſt Place, that He here takes a Point for granted, which He has by no Means proved, namely, that the Gift of Tongues had then ceaſed. Mr. *T.* in Reply " obſerves, that this is lay-

" ing a Work on Dr. *M.* that does not belong " to Him. He is no way, ſays He, con- " cerned to prove that it was ceaſed," that is, He is no way concerned to prove what the Title of his Book ſets forth, and what the whole Drift of his Book is to prove.---Mr. *T.* adds, it is to be taken for granted that Miracles ceaſed with the Apoſtles; that they did not, is the " Thing to be proved." (P. 77.) I deſire to take Nothing for granted, but ſhall inſiſt that all the *preſumptive* Evidence lies on the other Side, and diſpoſes Us to give Credit to the enſuing Evidence in Favour of the Continuance of ſuch miraculous Powers in After-Ages. Our Saviour promiſed them without limiting them to the Apoſtles, and in a Manner which not only *implied*, but *expreſſed*, that they ſhould *hereafter* attend Thoſe who ſhould believe. We find by the inſpired Writings, that they attended others beſides the Apoſtles, and We meet with Directions concerning the Application of them to the Edification of the Church. We ſee the Uſe of them in the Converſion of Unbelievers, and the Support of Chriſtians under Perſecutions; and We know that thoſe Reaſons continued in full Force for the Continuance of ſuch Powers in the Ages next ſucceeding the Apoſtles. If Any Thing is to be taken

for

for granted, it will be, that ſuch Gifts did continue, whilſt the ſame Exigencies and Occaſions did continue; unleſs ſome poſitive Proofs are brought to the contrary. Dr. *M.* plainly did not think, that this was a Work which did not belong to Him, but attempted in this very Inſtance to prove that the Gift of Tongues was ceaſed, becauſe *Irenæus* wanted it, who, if Any, might be preſumed to have it; and from the Ceaſing of this Miracle in particular, He inferred that all others were ceaſed likewiſe. His Argument indeed failed in both Parts; but the Attempt ſhewed his Opinion, that it was proper to bring poſitive Proofs of their Diſcontinuance, to invalidate the Preſumptions which would ariſe from the forementioned Circumſtances in Favour of their longer Subſiſtence.

But We deſire not to reſt on theſe *Preſumptive* Proofs only, or to give them more than their proper Weight in this Argument. We have a Cloud of Witneſſes to atteſt the Truth of the actual Continuance of theſe Powers in the Church, and Dr. *M.* has ſaved Us the Trouble of collecting them. He has exhibited them in one View, and has owned that theſe Witneſſes, " as far as " their Authority reaches, have cleared this " Argument from all Obſcurity, by their " ſtrong, explicit, and repeated Atteſtations

" of many extraordinary Gifts and miracu-
" lous Powers, which were conſtantly and
" publickly exerted in the Chriſtian Church
" thro' each ſucceeding Age." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 10.) Till their Authority therefore can be invalidated, We are in Poſſeſſion of poſitive Proofs on our Side of the Queſtion, and Nothing has yet been brought againſt them ſufficient to diſcredit their Character as Witneſſes in ſuch Facts as fell within their own Knowledge. But Mr. *T.* ſays, " This can be proved no otherwiſe than
" by aſcertaining Inſtances of their Conti-
" nuance." This is returning again to the old Objection of the Want of the Hiſtorical Specification of Names, and Times, and Places, on which enough has been ſaid already, and need not be repeated every Time the Exception recurs. The Witneſſes ſpoken of did not write *Hiſtories* but *Apologies*, and the Method that They took of appealing to *frequent Miracles*, rather than to *particular Inſtances*, was very ſuitable to their Purpoſe, and ſufficient to their Argument.

In aſſigning the Reaſon, why this Gift in particular might be withdrawn, and the reſt continued, Mr. *T.* ſays " I run as coun-
" ter to the prevailing Opinion, as Dr. *M.*
" does in his general Suppoſition of *no Mi-*
" *racles* after the *Apoſtles*". (P. 78.) This would

would have been Matter of much Surprize to me, if I had not already proceeded ſo far in the *Defence*, and ſeen ſo many Inſtances of this Gentleman's miſapprehending the State of the Caſe. What led Him to ſuch a Notion and Poſition in this Place, I have not the leaſt Glimpſe of Light to diſcern. In attempting to prove it, He makes uſe of my Account in Words very little different, and confirms my Opinion whilſt He thinks He is oppoſing it. "The chief "Intent of this Gift, ſays He, ſeems to "be, not ſo much to convince Unbelievers "by its own Evidence of the Authority a "Perſon acts under, as to gain Admiſſion "into Diſcourſe with them, and thereby furniſh Him with Opportunities of producing "his other Credentials." So ſaid I, "The "Gift of Tongues tho' as miraculous as any "in itſelf, and particularly uſeful in enabling the firſt Preachers to ſpeak to Perſons of all Nations and Languages, yet "was the leaſt convincing of Any to Gainſayers, unleſs, as in the Caſe of the Apoſtles, They knew their Perſons and Education beforehand." (*Free Anſwer*, P. 90, 91.) Now why This was not as true when I ſaid it, as when Mr. *T.* repeated it, or why it ran more counter to the prevailing Opinion in my Words, than in his,

his, I cannot comprehend; nor why He thought We differed in this Particular. The general Account I think is this, that the Gift of Tongues was to enable the firſt Preachers of Chriſtianity to ſpeak to all Nations in their own Language, and therefore, as I obſerved, it was neceſſary only for *Miſſionaries*. As ſoon as any Converts were gained amongſt the *Natives*, They could ſpeak to their Brethren in their own Tongue, and needed not ſupernatural Aſſiſtance in this Particular to gain Admiſſion into Diſcourſe with them, whatever They might do in other Inſtances to work Conviction upon them. As the Apoſtles therefore diſperſed Themſelves over the World, their firſt Succeſs prevented any farther abſolute Neceſſity for this Gift as a *Means of Converſion*, and furniſhed them with Partners in this Holy Work, who could join in talking to their own Countrymen. Before that Chriſtianity was ſo far eſtabliſhed, as to be able to make the reſt of its Way, by its own natural Strength, yet this Opening towards its future Succeſs might be accompliſhed by the Converſion of ſome Few in Each Place, who might in their Mother Tongue attempt the Converſion of the Reſt: And therefore this Gift, if this was its chief Intent, might very probably ceaſe, whilſt other miraculous

lous Endowments ſtill ſubſiſted in their full Vigour. *Natural Means* might now be uſed for an Opportunity of ſpeaking with Perſons of all Languages, and thereby gaining an Opportunity of producing Credentials; tho' *ſupernatural ones* might ſtill be neceſſary to exhibit and confirm thoſe Credentials. This is an eaſy and rational Account according to the chief Uſe that is aſſigned for this Gift of Tongues, and I ſee not wherein Mr. *T.* and I differ from Each Other, or from the prevailing Opinion.

I ſee no Reaſon likewiſe, why I may not concur with Mr. *T.* in leaving it to the Reader to attend carefully to the Charge of *Inconſiſtency* brought by Dr. *M.* againſt St. *Chryſoſtom* and St. *Auguſtin*, and the Diſtinction by which I obſerved They cleared Themſelves from the Charge. They thought the Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity prevented the Neceſſity of their Continuance as a Means of *converting Heathens*, but they thought that they were ſtill ſometimes wrought amongſt the *Believers* for their *Edification* or *Support*. Suppoſe that They were miſtaken or impoſed upon in the latter, This however frees them from any *Self-Contradiction*, which was the Accuſation here brought againſt them.

On

On Dr. *M*'s great Triumph over the Hiſtory of *Simeon Stylites*, I obſerved that " it chiefly " depended upon a Connection of his own, " that *Simeon*'s ſuppoſed Miracles were " wrought in Juſtification of the Peculiari- " ties of his Hiſtory, which I obſerved " was not pretended by Thoſe who be- " lieved and vindicated them." I entered not farther into the Conſideration of that Caſe, becauſe it lay beyond the Limits in Point of Time, with which I propoſed to concern Myſelf; but if Dr. *M.* ſtated the Principal Objection upon a Miſtake, this would be ſome Sort of Preſumption, that other more material ones were wanting. However if Mr. *T.* is diſpoſed to reject them in a Bundle, the Continuance of Miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church till the Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, is no ways affected by it, and whether this be admitted or not, the former will not be the leſs ſecure.

Mr. *T.* ſays He " perceives, that I think " Myſelf likewiſe obliged to defend the " Truth of the Story on which Dr. *Berri-* " *man* has inſiſted, concerning the Ortho- " dox Chriſtians of *Africa*, who are ſaid " to have ſpoke *articulately and diſtinctly*, " after their Tongues had been cut out by " the Order of *Hunneric* the *Vandal*." But how

how does it appear that I thought Myſelf *obliged* to do ſo? Might not I act upon the ſame Principle that Mr. *T.* did, who wrote a Book, not to decide the Queſtion in Diſpute, but merely to ſhew that Another Perſon had in his Opinion ſaid Nothing to the Purpoſe? Might not I therefore offer thoſe Remarks to ſhew, that Dr. *M.* at leaſt had not diſproved the Account, tho' I might not take upon me peremptorily to decide the Queſtion? Indeed I thought it a proper Inſtance to ſhew, how far Zeal and Prejudice can carry Men of the greateſt Abilities, when ſo acute a Reaſoner as Dr. *M.* could ferioufly mention a Report from the Academy of Sciences at *Paris*, of a Girl who was born without a Tongue, who yet talked diſtinctly, as an entire Confutation of all the Evidence that Dr. *Berriman* had offered of the Miracle wrought on the *African* Confeſſors. This was likewiſe particularly applicable to Dr. *M.* becauſe He was the *reputed* Author at leaſt of the firſt Anſwer to Dr. *B.* wherein this was called "a Mi-"racle of Miracles;" whereas now it ſeems there was Nothing at all Miraculous in the Caſe. Mr. *T.* does not attempt to defend this Objection, but only anſwers, that the ſame Hiſtorians related others, which are as much to be believed as this. By the Way, thoſe

thoſe other Miracles were not ſo particularly *examined* as this, and therefore are not ſo ſtrongly eſtabliſhed; but if the Belief of them followed from this, what is the abſurd Conſequence which would follow from thence? They are not trifling, or ridiculous, or to no End and Purpoſe, nor is there any Preſumption againſt their *Credibility* merely from the *Nature* of them.

Mr. *T.* has a farther Objection againſt this Miracle. He does not think the *Occaſion* worthy of a miraculous Interpoſition. Had this Objection come from another Quarter, it had been more conſiſtent and leſs ſurprizing, but a Gentleman who is "fully "convinced that the *Arian* Explication is "*falſe*," could not have named another Queſtion of equal Importance, wherein ſuch a Deciſion might more reaſonably be expected. Mr. *T.* ſays, "All the Parties "here concerned profeſſed Themſelves to be "*Chriſtians*; they only differed in the Ex-"plication of a Doctrine, which both Sides "allowed to be founded in the New "Teſtament." But this Doctrine about which *only* They differed, was that One, on which the Notion, the Importance, the Reality of our Salvation depend. The whole Scheme of our Redemption varies on the different Explication; and the Doctrines, the Duties,

Duties, the Motives of Chriſtianity are exalted or debaſed, as We embrace the one or the other of theſe Syſtems. Whether the Saviour of Mankind was *God*, or only a *Noble Creature*, was a Point of the higheſt Nature in itſelf, and on which the Meritorioufneſs of the Propitiation offered by Him muſt entirely reſt; and if the Powers of Nature, which received their Exiſtence and Force from Him, were not properly to be altered or reverſed, to prove his real *Divinity*, No Occaſion of greater Conſequence can be aſſigned, on which a Miracle might be expected. More eſpecially as Thoſe who maintained the Truth, according both to Mr. *T*'s Opinion and Mine, were *under Perſecution* at that Time, the *Support of perſecuted Believers*, as well as the *Conviction of Gainſayers* might be intended by this Event, and This is allowed in other Inſtances to be a reaſonable and ſufficient Ground for a miraculous Interpoſition. But Mr. *T.* thinks that " there have been always learned and pious " Men, who have doubted of this Article, " who moſt probably would not ſtand out " againſt the clear Evidence of a Miracle; " He thinks, it caſts a Reflection on the " Wiſdom of God, as if He did Things by " Halves, to ſuppoſe it neceſſary for Him " to work Miracles in order to aſcertain

" the

" the Senſe of the Scriptures; and He thinks " that it would deſtroy the univerſal Truth " of that Propoſition, that the Scriptures " are ſufficiently plain in all Things neceſ- " ſary to Salvation." (P. 81, 82.) I dare ſay Mr. *T.* did not ſee the Conſequences of theſe Poſitions, which would equally prove that there never was a Miracle, every Alteration, according to this Reaſoning, implying a Reflection on the firſt Conſtitution of Things as if it was imperfect,---and that there was no ſufficient Evidence for the Miracles of the Goſpel, for there were Men, in all Appearance, of Learning and Piety who ſtood out againſt them;---and that there was no One Doctrine ſufficiently plain in Scripture, for there is not one which has not been diſputed. What are the ſecret Motives, which influence Mens Hearts in rejecting Facts or Doctrines, for which there is plain and ſufficient Evidence, We are not, nor do We deſire to be Judges; but ſuch Inſtances of rejecting them are no Proofs againſt that Plainneſs and Sufficiency. *Our Saviour's Miracles* were rejected by Many in whoſe Preſence They were wrought; The Doctrine of *Baptiſm* is rejected by Many who pretend to believe the Scriptures; but Mr. *T.* will not therefore ſay that either the One or the Other were not ſufficiently atteſted.

But

But if We cannot, nor do pretend to judge of the private Motives influencing the *Hearts of Men*, much leſs do We preſume to judge of all the Motives influencing the *Deity* in his Proceedings. We do not pretend to ſay, that it was *neceſſary* for Him to work Miracles in order to aſcertain the Senſe of the Scriptures, becauſe We may have Evidence that He has done it in a particular Inſtance. He is no *neceſſary Agent*, but diſpenſes all his Bleſſings with great Variety. He grants Favours, both with Reſpect to *Knowlege* and *Practice*, to Some, which He denies to Others, and is Himſelf the only Proper Judge of Times, and Seaſons, and Occaſions of Interpoſing: We cannot infer that He muſt *always* do what He has *once* done, nor is it any Prejudice to the Evidence of that Interpoſition, that the Occaſion was not prevented by irreſiſtible Evidence formerly given. If We can ſhew that the Interpoſition was not *incredible*, it is all that is neceſſary on our Part; if We can point out the particular *Uſe* and *Benefit* of it, We do more than can be required of Us, and do ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh the external Evidence: And if the *Truth* and *Importance* of any Doctrine be a weighty Conſideration, and worthy of the Divine Care and Protection, it cannot be urged with

with greater Force in any Caſe than in this. Mr. *T.* will obſerve, that I have not entered into the Examination of the *Witneſſes* with Reſpect to the Miracle before Us, (it being beſide my preſent Queſtion) but have only obviated his Objections againſt the Credibility of the Miracle itſelf, and have ſhewn, according to his own Expreſſion, that " it may be true, for ought Any Thing He " has ſaid to diſprove it."

The Elegance of the Phraſe is very ſuitable to the Force of the Argument in the next Paragraph. " Mr. *D*'s next undertaking, ſays Mr. *T.* is to lick a famous " Paſſage of *Tertullian* into Shape:" And the deciſive Sentence is, " all the Plaſtick " Art of ten Men more can never do it." He then proceeds in a high Style of Contempt and Triumph on the Strength of his own declared Opinion. But Aſſertions prove Nothing. Let Us once more review the Paſſage, and the Reflections that on both Sides were paſſed on it. Dr. *M.* had charged the Primitive Fathers with having " trained " the Ages, in which They lived, to blind " Credulity and Superſtition, by teaching " them to conſider *the Impoſſibility of a* " *Thing as an Argument for the Belief of it.*" (P. 186.) To ſupport this Charge He brings a *ſingle Sentence* from a *ſingle Father*, which,

if

if it was as abſurd as He would repreſent it, could never juſtify ſuch a *general* Accuſation. This Circumſtance his *Defender* thought fit to drop; tho' if one incautious Sentence would fix ſuch an Imputation upon a Whole Body of Men, No Characters could be ſecure; and this Charge in particular might be as ſtrongly brought againſt the Modern as againſt the Ancient Apologiſts for Chriſtianity. The eminently Learned and Pious Biſhop *Beveridge* has fallen into the *ſame Train of Thought*, and almoſt the very *ſame Expreſſion* that *Tertullian* did. Upon the Subject of the Holy Trinity He has theſe remarkable Reflections. "This I con-"feſs is a Myſtery, which I cannot poſſibly "conceive, yet 'tis a Truth, which I can "eaſily believe; yea, *therefore* it is ſo true "that I can eaſily believe it, *becauſe* it is ſo "high that I cannot poſſibly conceive it." Why becauſe? Mr. *T.* will ſay, How could his not conceiving it be any Argument for the Truth of it? Let Us hear Him out. "For it is impoſſible, continues He, Any "Thing ſhould be true of the Infinite "Creator, which can be fully expreſſed "to the Capacities of a Finite Creature: "And for this Reaſon, I ever did, and "ever ſhall look upon thoſe Apprehenſions "of God to be the trueſt, whereby We

" apprehend Him to be the moſt incom-
" prehenſible, and that to be the moſt true
" of God, which ſeems moſt impoſſible unto
" Us." (*Private Thoughts*, Part I. Article 3.) Would it now be a juſt and fair Repreſentation, from a View of this Paſſage, to ſay that the " Biſhops or Divines of the " Church of *England*, in the Seventeenth " Century, trained up that Age to blind " Credulity and Superſtition by teaching " them to conſider the Impoſſibility of a " Thing as an Argument for the Belief of " it?" Or might not this be ſaid with exactly the ſame Truth and Reaſon as Dr. *M.* ſaid it of the Primitive Fathers on the Strength of a like Paſſage in *Tertullian*? I do not ſay that the Biſhop's is not an unguarded Expreſſion, but I ſay that a Man muſt take Pains to miſunderſtand the Deſign of it, and to charge Him with the Abſurdity with which the Dr. has charged the forementioned Father. Biſhop *Beveridge*'s Intent plainly was to ſignify, not that a real Impoſſibility was an Argument of Truth, but that the Subject Matter of Revelation muſt be ſuppoſed to be ſomewhat of an extraordinary Nature;---that Doctrines relating to the Deity muſt be preſumed to be far beyond our Comprehenſion; and that if they were by Revelation repreſented to be ſuch, they were

on that Account not the leſs, but the more credible: Had our pre-conceived Opinions been right, He ſignifies that there would have been no Occaſion for a ſupernatural Interpoſition for our Direction; ſomewhat therefore not only *different* from, but *contrary* to our former Reaſonings might be expected in ſuch a miraculous Manifeſtation of God concerning his Nature, or his Will; and if ſuch Diſcoveries were found in his Word, as We ſhould leaſt have thought of by the Strength of our natural Reaſon, They were rather *confirmed* than *weakened* by that Conſideration. Theſe Reflections, which Biſhop *Beveridge* uſed with Reſpect to the Doctrine of the *Ever-bleſſed Trinity*, are the very ſame which *Tertullian* applied to the Hiſtory of the *Incarnation*, *Paſſion*, and *Reſurrection* of the Son of God. He ſays, that they are the more ſure and certain in a Chriſtian's Account for the Objections which Unbelievers raiſed againſt them. Our Saviour had foretold his Diſciples, that their Belief and Truſt in Him would bring them into Shame and Diſgrace with the Refined Reaſoners amongſt Men: St. *Paul* had prepared them for the ſame Trial by aſſuring them, that They muſt give up the Eſteem of the World, if They would embrace and maintain the deſpiſed Doctrines of the Croſs; for

that Reproach and Inſult would certainly attend the Profeſſion of them. The Prejudices of the *Philoſophers* as well as of the *Vulgar* lay againſt them, and the higheſt Pretenſions of Reaſon would be the ſtrongeſt againſt theſe revealed Truths. A Believer was directed to *become a Fool*, (in the Opinion of the Wiſe Men of the World) that *He might be wiſe* indeed in admitting the Contents of Revelation. *For the Wiſdom of this World is Fooliſhneſs with God.* The Event anſwered the Expectation raiſed by theſe Predictions and Admonitions. The Belief of the *Incarnation* of the Son of God, his *Crucifixion*, and triumphant *Return to Life*, brought on all the Diſgrace and Inſult which had been foretold, and were immediately repreſented as ridiculous, abſurd, and even impoſſible. This Repreſentation *Tertullian* conſiders as a Confirmation of their Truth, it being that which Believers were particularly taught to expect. He had expreſſly referred to thoſe predictive Diſcourſes of *Our Saviour* and of St. *Paul*, and this Completion of them He urges as a farther Proof of thoſe Doctrines which They taught. As if He had ſaid to his Adverſary, "You object to the *Incarnation* "of the *Son of God* as in itſelf a *ſhameful* Hy- "potheſis; The Objection was foreſeen, and "I am taught to glory in that which is

"Matter of Ridicule with the Wits of the "World:—The *Death* of this *Divine Perſon* "by the painful and ignominious Death of "the *Croſs* is with You the very Height of "*Fooliſhneſs*; This anſwers likewiſe to what "I was prepared to hear from You, and "confirms the Credibility of that great Arti-"cle:—His *Reſurrection from Death* You "repreſent as contrary to the Courſe of Na-"ture, and therefore abſolutely *impoſſible*. "This again I know is the Method of "Reaſoning with thoſe who call Themſelves "*Philoſophers*, but your Prejudices againſt "this Article were particularly guarded a-"gainſt, and this Point was confirmed the "more clearly and ſecurely by *Revelation*; "on Account of that very Notion of Yours "relating to the *Impoſſibility* of it." This is very plainly the Courſe and Manner of *Tertullian*'s Argument, wholly depending on the Diſtinction of *Relying ſolely on their own Reaſon*, or of *admitting a Divine Revelation* deſigned to correct the Errors of Reaſon, and particularly declared in the Goſpel to be contrary to many of its Prejudices and Prepoſſeſſions. If you take theſe Sentences of *Tertullian* in this Light, and with a View to the different Principles of the Perſon *to* whom, and of Him *by* whom They were delivered, the former making his own na-

tural Light the Meaſure of all Truth, the latter confeſſing and urging the Evidence of a ſupernatural Interpoſition, This *Antitheſis* gives Perſpicuity and Force to his Obſervations, and renders the Senſe of them rational and conſiſtent, as in the foregoing Paraphraſe. But if You conſider them *without* a View to that *Antitheſis*, and *without any Connection* with what paſſed immediately before them, then You do not take them as the Apologiſt delivered them. The Sentences are no longer *his* but *yours*, and You do not *find* the Nonſenſe, but *make* it. An *Hypothetical* Poſition, which is true and pertinent in its *Connection*, may become falſe and foreign if conſidered *abſtractedly*; and that Preacher, who in the Times of Uſurpation and Confuſion, undertook to prove that All Believers were damned, urging that Text of St. *Paul*, *They alſo which are fallen aſleep in Chriſt, are periſhed*; had as much Authority to ſay that That was the Apoſtle's Doctrine, as Dr. *M.* had to ſay that *Tertullian*, and the other Fathers, taught their Diſciples to conſider *the Impoſſibility of a Thing as an Argument for the Belief of it*. The Sentence cited in each Caſe was only one *imperfect Link* of a Chain and Reaſoning, and this I before obſerved in the preſent Caſe; but Mr. *T.* found it eaſier peremptorily to *pronounce*

nounce the Paſſage to be abſurd, than to *prove it* to be ſo, either by ſhewing that there was no ſuch Antitheſis and Connection as I had obſerved in the Introduction to it, or that they did not help to clear the Difficulty. He may now however find his Laconick Queſtion, "Why Becauſe?" more diſtinctly anſwered, and that there was not wanting a *Medium*, by which the *Impoſſibility* of a Thing in the Eſtimation of an Unbeliever might be the very Reaſon why it was rendered more *credible*, and even more *certain* to a Believer, on the Authority of Revelation, which was the very Diſtinction that *Tertullian* inſiſted on. And now, whether ſofter Terms than *Shocking and egregious Nonſenſe*, and a leſs invidious Turn than the Parallel of a *bigotted Adherer to the Popiſh Church*, might not have ſuited better with ſo impotent an Attack on a plain and rational Expoſition of *Tertullian*'s Diſcourſe, without any Attempt of an Argument to invalidate it, I ſhall leave to Mr. *T*'s Recollection. He begs Pardon, which He needs not, for inſiſting on the Liberty of judging for Himſelf, and He has my free Leave to judge not only *for* Himſelf, but *by* Himſelf. For I have not met with a ſingle Perſon that, on an attentive Review of that Paſſage, has not acknowleged that the *Senſe* of *Tertullian*'s Argument was upon the whole intelligible and

conſiſtent, however ſtrange the *Expreſſion* might appear by itſelf.

The Laſt Part of the *Free Inquiry* was intended to obviate the Objections, which the Author foreſaw would be made to his new Scheme. The Firſt of theſe was that "the "Authority of the Books of the New Teſta-"ment, which were tranſmitted to Us thro' "their Hands, would thereby be rendered "precarious and Uncertain." The Dr. makes two Replies on this Part of the Argument; the firſt is, that "the Authority of theſe "Books does not depend on the Faith of the "Fathers; but on the general Credit and "Reception which they found with all the "private Chriſtians of thoſe Ages, whoſe "Intereſt it was to preſerve them, and whoſe "Religious Regard for them, beſides the "Jealouſy of Parties, did excite their Care "to preſerve them." I anſwered that the Exception would lie at leaſt as ſtrong againſt private People as againſt the Publick Teachers, for if their Credulity and Superſtition, or Craft, were ſo great, as to diſqualify them for Witneſſes in Matters of Fact, and their concurrent Teſtimony was to be rejected in a Caſe, in which they could not be deceived, the Objection would recur with Reſpect to Thoſe who were taught by them, whoſe Principles and Practices could not be ſuppoſed to be

better than those of their Teachers, nor consequently their Testimony more worthy of Regard. I added particularly, that this Method of resting the Authority of the Sacred Canon on the Reception of it by Private Persons, was in a great Measure weakened by the Account of those Difficulties suggested by Himself, concerning the Circulation of Copies at that Time; "when," says Dr. *M.* "there were no Books in the World, but "what were written out by Hand, with "great Labour and Expence, the Method of "publishing them was necessarily very slow, "and the Price very dear; so that the Rich "only and Curious would be disposed or able "to purchase them, and to such also it was "often difficult to procure them, or to know "even where they were to be bought." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 198.) This was his Account, when it answered another Purpose, and as far as it was true, would hold as strongly with Respect to the *Scriptures* as to the *Apologies* of the Primitive Fathers; and if this was the Case, and if farther, the Christians were that poor, mean, despicable People, even in the third Century, that Dr. *M.* represents them to be, then there could not be such numerous Copies of the New Testament dispersed amongst private Believers, as might secure their Authenticity and Purity, independently

pendently on the Teſtimony of the Fathers. The chief Copies muſt, according to this Account, be in the Hands of the chief Apologiſts and Governors of the Church; and if They were ſo "credulous and ſuperſtitious, and ſo little ſcrupulous of any Arts "or Means to propagate their Opinions," as They are deſcribed to be, We can have no Security, that the Scriptures are tranſmitted to Us genuine and uncorrupted. Mr. T. ſays here, it is proper to remind me of a Circumſtance, which He thinks I ſeem to have forgot; namely, "that Dr. *M.* has endeavoured "to make it appear, that the immediate Succeſſors of the Apoſtles made no Pretenſions "at all to Miraculous Gifts; that the firſt "Time We hear of any ſuch Claim is in "*Juſtin Martyr*'s firſt Apology preſented a-"bout the Year of Chriſt 140; conſequently "that there is a Vacancy of more than Half "a Century, wherein the Fidelity of the "Teachers and Governors of the Church is "liable to no Suſpicion: And He preſumes that "it is ſhewn in the Beginning of his Papers, "that I have not evinced the Dr. of any "Miſtake in this Article." (P. 85.) I will not repeat what has been ſaid on that Article, nor repeat, in Mr. T's Manner, my own Opinion by Way of Argument, but ſhall leave that Matter to the Judgment of the

Reader;

Reader; it may however properly be added, that were this Obſervation true, yet the Difficulties urged by Dr. *M.* concerning the Diſperſing of Copies in ſo much later an Age, would be ſtill of Force againſt the Suppoſition of there being a ſufficient Number of thoſe Copies diſperſed in half a Century, as that the ſucceeding Fathers could not corrupt them, if They had ſo much Craft and ſo little Integrity as to attempt it; which is the Subſtance of their Character as drawn by Dr. *M.* Farther, that Author lays great Streſs on the *Credulity* and *Superſtition* of the Fathers as diſcrediting their Teſtimony in any Caſe, and He has not cleared even the Apoſtolical Fathers from that Charge. Their *Fidelity alone* will not, on his Principles, ſecure their Teſtimony in ſuch a Caſe, nor convince Us that They delivered down the genuine Books of the New Teſtament to Us. There is no expreſs Teſtimony to their Advantage in this Point of *Judgment*, or *Care* to prevent Impoſitions, and the Inſinuations thrown in ſuggeſt the contrary. "They appear, ſays Dr. "*M.* to have been Men of great Piety, In-"tegrity, and Simplicity; and That is all I "think, which We need to declare of them "on this Occaſion." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 274.) The Reaſon given for the Omiſſion of the other Parts of their Character was, that

They

They bore no direct Teſtimony to the Queſtion concerning Miracles; ſo that We do not know Dr. *M*'s Opinion whether They were proper Judges to ſettle and tranſmit the Canon of the New Teſtament, or whether He will accept of this Suggeſtion of Mr. *T*. in his Favour. This I think All muſt allow, that it muſt be eaſier to determine concerning the Reality of the Continuance of Miracles amongſt them, than concerning the Genuineneſs of doubtful Books, when ſpurious ones were actually written, and ſometimes received for a Time in particular Places. The latter Judgment muſt require more Induſtry and more Penetration than the former; and therefore if general Imputations of *Credulity* and *Superſtition* will invalidate poſitive Teſtimonies in the Caſe of *Miracles*, much more in the *Traditional* Delivery of the Authenticity of Books: And the Authority of the Sacred Canon and the Characters of the Fathers will ſtill be found to be cloſely connected.

Dr. *M*. replies farther, that if the Objection was true, it would not prove his Argument to be falſe. "If the Authority of the "Scriptures ſhould really be weakened by "his Character of the Fathers, Who can "help it? If the Charge be confirmed by "Facts, it muſt be admitted as true, how

"far

"far ſoever the Conſequences may reach." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 192, 193.) This I thought was ſpeaking quite out, and accordingly charged it as *inconſiſtent* in the Mouth of a *Profeſſed Chriſtian*. One of that Character would, I thought, have ſtartled at the Conſequence, and would have been willing to ſuſpect ſome Fallacy in an Argument which would end in ſuch a Concluſion. A *Believer* and *Teacher* of the Chriſtian Religion might well have been expected to guard carefully againſt ſuch a Conſequence, and to expreſs more Regard for the Authority of Scripture than for a new and peculiar Opinion. But Dr. *M.* is, not by ſecret Inſinuation, but by open Profeſſion, willing to give up every Thing rather than his new Scheme, and to hazard all rather than not eſtabliſh his own Diſcovery. Mr. *T.* neither *defends* nor *blames* this Indifference expreſſed towards the Support of the Authority of the Sacred Canon, but thinks it ſufficient to obſerve that "All Truths are co-"incident;" that if "the Primitive Miracles "were really not true, there can be no Dan-"ger in diſcarding them;" that "Chriſtiani-"ty may be *kept on its Legs* without them;" "and that "the Author of that Religion can "never deſire to have it ſupported by Falſe-"hood." (P. 86.) Now tho' the Truth of all this be allowed, yet it does not in the

leaſt

leaſt clear Dr. *M.* of *Inconſiſtency* in profeſſing to *believe*, and undertaking to *teach* the Doctrines of the Scriptures, whilſt He inſiſts that it would be no Prejudice to the Force of his Argument, tho' it ſhould be thought to end in undermining the Authority of thoſe Scriptures. "All Truths are certainly coin-"cident," and therefore ſuch Truths, if ſuch there be, as would overthrow the Credit of the Goſpel, muſt, if We are conſiſtent, end in converting Us to Heatheniſm. If indeed Chriſtianity itſelf be not really true, there can be no Danger in diſcarding it, but a Man muſt be *ſelf-condemned*, who profeſſes it, whilſt He advances Principles which He may ſee will end in overthrowing it. Chriſtianity may likewiſe be *kept on its Legs*, as Mr. *T.* expreſſes it, without the Belief of the Continuance of Miracles in the Primitive Church; but the very Point in View was, the Suppoſition that it could not, at leaſt that the Scripture, which is the Rule of it, could not; and yet in this Caſe Dr. *M.* ſays, that it would be no Prejudice to his Argument; for that if his Charge againſt the Fathers was confirmed by Facts, it muſt be admitted as true, *how far ſoever the Conſequences may reach.* This was the Light in which *Inconſiſtency* was charged on the Doctor, in that Part of the *Free Anſwer*, not merely that his Principles would weaken

the

the Authority of the Sacred Canon, (for that might have been the Conſequence, and He might not have been aware of it) but in his looking calmly on that *ſuppoſed* Conſequence, and yet inſiſting that his Argument was not the leſs true. But this State of the Caſe Mr. T. either miſtook, or choſe to overlook, and has only advanced ſome general Truths, which may very innocently be admitted, without Danger of any ill Conſequence.

The Second Objection that Dr. *M.* endeavoured to guard againſt was This, that "All "Suſpicion of Fraud in the Caſe of the Primitive Miracles ſeems to be precluded by "that publick Appeal and Challenge, which "the Chriſtian Apologiſts make to their Ene"mies the Heathens, to come and ſee with "their own Eyes the Reality of the Facts "which They atteſt." This the Doctor evaded by obſerving, that They had not the proper Opportunities of publiſhing and making known their Apologies;—that They were a poor, mean, deſpicable Sort of People, that Men of Figure and Fortune could not be ſuppoſed to pay any Attention to; and that it could not be expected that Governors *then*, any more than *now*, would pay any Sort of Regard to ſuch Pretenſions. I obſerved in Anſwer, that ſuch Suggeſtions were contradicted by *Fact*, by the *Hiſtories* and *Apologies*

of

of thoſe Times, by the Conceſſions of Dr. *M.* Himſelf in other Places, and by the Regard which even at this Time was paid to inferior Pretenſions. But This Evaſion, on which Dr. *M.* reſted the Whole of his Anſwer to this very material Objection, is paſſed over in entire Silence by Mr. *T.* without any Attempt of ſtrengthening the Dr's Reply, or refuting mine. He neither *juſtifies* nor *gives up* thoſe abuſive Accounts of the Primitive Chriſtians, nor offers to confirm the Dr's Aſſertion, that their Apologies could not reach the Ears, or were not worthy the Notice of their Governors. He refers Us only to his Reflections on the Caſe of *ejecting Dæmons*, to which and the Examination of them, I may refer alſo.

He adds however, that "in Caſe the Heathens did Themſelves admit the Notion "of *Poſſeſſions*, the Appeal was very properly "and acutely made by the Apologiſts, be"cauſe it was contending with them upon "their own Principles." (P. 87.) This is very true, if their Notion was well grounded; but there could be neither *Propriety* nor *Acuteneſs*, in *oppoſing one Cheat to Another*, as Dr. *M.* repreſents this Caſe; for had They given the Heathens ſuch an Opportunity of detecting them in their principal Claim, what an Imputation muſt They neceſſarily have

brought

brought on the *Genuineneſs* of former Miracles ſaid to be wrought in Defence of this Religion, and on the *Sincerity* of the preſent Profeſſors and Teachers of it? They could not have given their Enemies a greater Advantage than by making ſuch falſe Pretenſions, merely in Accommodation to an Error of theirs; and indeed the Manner in which They offered this Claim, inſiſting that They would make the Devils own their Nature, is an unanſwerable Proof that this was not the Caſe. Dr. *M.* had indeed a farther Scheme in Reſerve to evade this obvious Remark and the Force of it; for He repreſents it, as if They *kept Numbers of theſe Dæmoniacs in Pay, always ready for the Shew*; and then by *Confederacy* ſuch Confeſſions might eaſily be obtained. What Degree of implicit Faith Dr. *M.* *expected* in his Readers, it is not eaſy to ſay, but certainly This Part of his Inquiry *required* a great Share of it. The firſt Reference to thoſe Apologies, wherein theſe Appeals are made, muſt convince Us, that neither the *Time*, nor *Place*, nor *Manner* of their Challenges can poſſibly admit of this Conſtruction. They challenged their Adverſaries to bring Any One whom Themſelves knew to be poſſeſſed; to bring Him before their own Tribunals, and They ſhould ſee Him inſtantly diſpoſſeſſed by any common

Chriſtians: And theſe Propoſals were made very early, long before any ſuch Regulations took Place as Dr. *M.* refers to, whereby He thinks They might be always ready for the Shew. Mr. *T.* adds, that "if the Heathens "did not admit the Notion of Poſſeſſions, "then 'tis no Sort of Wonder that They paid "no Regard at all to it." This Suppoſition is entirely imaginary, and if it was not, would not clear the Difficulty for which it is intended as a Solution. That the Heathens admitted the Notion of Poſſeſſions, and had Exorciſts amongſt them that pretended to cure them, is allowed and even inſiſted on by Dr. *M.* and is clear from the Teſtimonies and Arguments of the Primitive Writers. But ſuppoſe They had not, their Neglect cannot invalidate the poſitive Teſtimony of the Fathers; all Suſpicion of Fraud in *them* is precluded by theſe their frequent Appeals and Offers of ſubmitting their Claim to publick Examination, whether Others would examine into them or not. Neither is it certain or probable, that the Heathens would pay no Regard at all to theſe Pretenſions, if They did not admit the Notion of Poſſeſſions. If They rejected the Opinion of the Power of the *Devils* over the Bodies of Men, They muſt then ſuppoſe the Caſes ſpoken of to be owing merely to *natural Diſtempers*, and if, whilſt

whilſt They were under this Perſuaſion, the Chriſtians aſſured them that *theſe* were *real Poſſeſſions*, and that They would prove them to be ſuch by *caſting out the Devils* in their Preſence, and forcing them by the Name of *Jeſus* to declare what They were, the very *Novelty* of ſuch Pretenſions, according to this Suppoſition, would have excited the Curioſity of many, and very probably have raiſed as much Attention and Deſire of Examination as any other Motive whatſoever. Beſides, the Relief would have been the ſame to the afflicted Sufferers, whether their Sufferings were owing to *natural* Diſeaſe, or the *preternatural* Operations of Evil Spirits; and on this Account ſuch a Propoſal could not fail of creating ſome Regard for the Sake of the beneficial *Effect*, whatever different Opinions were entertained concerning the *Cauſe* of the Malady. This Conſideration obviates the very *Suppoſition* of a general Neglect of ſuch a Claim, and as to the *Reality* of the *Poſſeſſions*, which Mr. *T.* here again declares to be *improbable*, That may be left to what has been already offered on that Subject.

The third Objection repeated and examined by Dr. *M.* was This, " that no Suſpicion of " Craft can reaſonably be entertained againſt " Perſons of ſuch exalted Piety, who expoſed " Themſelves to Perſecution, and even to

" Martyrdom in Confirmation of the Truth " of what They taught." He endeavoured to obviate this by obſerving that Religious Zeal is apt to biaſs Men in Favour of Any Thing that is thought uſeful to it; and that Martyrdom might be owing to many other Motives than a mere Principle of Duty. I replied diſtinctly to theſe Suggeſtions; but here Mr. T. leaves the Dr. again, and inſtead of attempting to *defend* ſome exceptionable Paſſages under this Head, goes off to a *Parallel* between the Teſtimony of the *Primitive Fathers*, and of the preſent *Members of the Romiſh Church* with Reſpect to this Point of *Miracles*. He obſerves, that there are in this moſt corrupt Church many excellent Men, and whether We ſuppoſe them to be impoſed upon Themſelves in this Article, or endeavouring to impoſe upon Others, either Way the ſame Account may be given of the moſt early Writers, conſiſtently with the Belief of their general good Character. " If the Papiſts, ſays He, " do really believe the Hiſtory of Miracles as " it is continued in their own Church, then a " Number of learned and able Men may be " deluded and impoſed upon. But if They " do not believe it, the Conſequence will " then be, that pious and good Men, ſuch " as would not ſcruple to lay down their " Lives upon the general Queſtion of their

" Religion,

"Religion, may for what They think *Rea-*
"*ſons of Expediency*, concur in countenancing
"and propagating of Falſhood." (P. 91.)
This *Parallel* was obviated beforehand, and the Difference between the two Caſes ſhewn in ſeveral conſiderable Circumſtances, in different Parts of the *Free Anſwer*. Let Us however review them on this Occaſion.

We will firſt take the Suppoſition, that the *Papiſts* do *believe* the Hiſtory of their own Miracles, and if ſo, ſays Mr. *T.* "then a "large Number of learned and able Men "may be deluded and impoſed upon." There are two very material Articles in this ſuppoſed Caſe different from that of the *Primitive Fathers*. The *Papiſts* are taught this Belief of Miracles in their earlieſt Infancy, and are not allowed a *free Inquiry* into them in their riper Years; ſo that with original Prepoſſeſſions in their Favour, and without Opportunity of proper Examination afterwards, 'tis highly probable that They *may give Credit* to the Pretence of Miracles, notwithſtanding their Learning and Abilities in other Reſpects. The very Reverſe of this was the Caſe of thoſe Writers, whoſe Teſtimony is now called in Queſtion. Moſt of the *Apologiſts*, who relate and vindicate this Claim in the Primitive Church, were ſo far from having their *firſt Inſtructions* in Favour of theſe Miracles, that

the Prejudices of their Education lay againſt all ſuch Pretenſions amongſt the Chriſtians. They were forced to give up their firſt Notions, and croſs all the Opinions inſtilled in their Childhood, before They could learn to think favourably of this Cauſe, or of the Evidence of it. Nothing but a full Examination of ſuch Evidence, and a clear Conviction of the Reality of it, could have induced them to change the *perſecuting* for the *perſecuted* Side, and when they afterwards maintained the ſame Pretenſions Themſelves, by a thorough View of which they had been brought over to the Acknowledgment of the Goſpel, there was not a Poſſibility of their not knowing whether there was any juſt Ground for ſuch Pretenſions or not. Can the Faith then of ſuch Converts with Reſpect to the Continuance of Miraculous Powers amongſt them, be juſtly parallel'd with That of Thoſe, who owe their *Faith* merely to *Inſtruction*, who were taught this Belief before They were arrived at the uſe of Reaſon, and were denied the Opportunity of exerciſing it afterwards? Can there be a greater Abſurdity with Reſpect to the *former*, than that Account given by Mr. *T.* as the moſt favourable one, that "They believed them all upon "the Reports of common Fame, without "examining into their Foundation, or having been

"been assured of their Truth in a single In-
"stance upon a Testimony of their own
"Senses?" (P. 72, 73.) Or is Any Thing more credible than that This is the very Truth of the Case, with Respect to the Latter? The Former had never been Christians at all, if They had trusted in the Reports of common Fame; The Latter think themselves the better Christians for such credulous Trust in those Reports, and esteem an implicit Faith, without Examination, meritorious.

Again, the Primitive Christians offered those Claims, which They maintained, to *publick Examination*. They not only believed them Themselves, but They offered them as Evidences for the Conviction of Unbelievers. This is not only a Proof of their *Sincerity*, but of their *Judgment*, and of the *Care*, which They had taken to know the Truth and Foundation of these Pretensions; for They would never have staked the Safety of their Lives, and the Success of their Religion, upon a Claim which They had received only upon the Reports of common Fame. Do the *Papists* do the same? Do the Men of Learning and Ability in the *Romish Church*, whom at present We suppose to *believe* these Things Themselves, propose them to the *free Inquiry of Protestants?* Do They call upon these reputed Hereticks to come and be Witnesses to

their Miraculous Powers, and to ſift as narrowly as They pleaſe, into the Foundation of them? If They did, We might preſume that They had looked well into this Matter, before They put it to the Teſt, and hazarded ſo much on the Conſequence of it; but as They do not, it may be preſumed that They have embraced the whole Account *implicitly*; and their Faith in this Point, not built on any Examination in Themſelves, much leſs offered to the Examination of Others, is in no Degree to be paralleld with the Belief and Report of the Primitive Chriſtians as to the Continuance of Miraculous Powers amongſt them, which had both thoſe Advantages; which was owing in them to *Perſonal Conviction* againſt former Prejudices, and was propoſed for the ſame End to the *Inquiry* of the moſt prejudiced and ſagacious of their Adverſaries.

Let Us next Suppoſe that wiſe, and otherwiſe good Men, in the Romiſh Church, do *not believe* the Hiſtory of Miracles, as it is continued amongſt them, yet chooſe to countenance the Notion, and ſupport a Pious Fraud for the Sake of ſome ſuppoſed good End to be ſerved by it, then ſays Mr. *T.* it will follow that "Pious and Good Men, ſuch "as would not ſcruple to lay down their "Lives upon the general Queſtion of their "Religion, may for what They think *Rea-*

"*ſons*

"ſons of *Expediency*, concur in countenancing "and propagating of Falſhood." And This He would have Us underſtand to be as applicable to the Members of the Primitive Church before the Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity, as to the Members of the preſent Romiſh Church ſince the Eſtabliſhment of Popery; and *thinks He has done the former no Injury by the Compariſon.* For my Part I think the *Compariſon* greatly *injurious* as well as *erroneous.* I make no more Doubt than Mr. *T.* does, that there are ſtill many excellent Men in the Romiſh Communion, but upon the Suppoſition now before Us, I make no Scruple to ſay that They are not ſo Good in that Communion as They would have been out of it. They are corrupted in Part by the corrupt Church of which They are Members, and if They will, notwithſtanding all their Goodneſs, countenance a known Fraud out of a Notion of Piety, if They are even taught to do ſo by the Doctrines eſtabliſh'd amongſt them, yet ſuch Practice will ever remain *indefenſible*; and they are pitiable as well as blameable in being miſled by ſuch authoritative Rules and Examples. They are in this Reſpect under a Diſadvantage which the Primitive Chriſtians were entirely free from. They knew no ſuch Diſtinction, nor acknowleged any Rule of Faith or Practice

different

different from or equal to the Holy Scripture. They knew the inſpired Writings forbid the *Doing Evil that Good might come*, and They knew of no Authority which could reverſe that Doctrine. They had no *Council of Trent* to miſguide them, nor allowed of any Power which could diſpenſe with moral and religious Obligations, or which could evacuate or alter the Word of God. If They did *wilfully prevaricate*, and maintain Claims which They knew had no Foundation, They muſt be abſolutely *abandoned*; and no Scheme or Parallel can reconcile their ſuppoſed Piety with ſuch a Practice. They could not plead the looſe Caſuiſtry of their Governors, nor a Miſtake in Judgment owing to a blind Obedience to Eccleſiaſtical Determinations, as the well-meaning Papiſts may do; but if They were Guilty of Forgery at all, it muſt be with great Aggravations, in Oppoſition to their Doctrines and to their Conſciences. They muſt neceſſarily be *more blameable* than the Patrons of Pious Frauds in the Church of *Rome*, who may think themſelves right in ſuch a Practice, which the Primitive Chriſtians could not do. We muſt therefore give up their *Sincerity* or allow their *Teſtimony*, for the ſame Diſtinction will not ſave their Credit, which may be pleaded in Favour of the miſguided Romaniſts. No ſuch looſe Morality,

or

or unſound Caſuiſtry, as That of maintaining *Pious Frauds*, prevailed in the early Ages, but We muſt on one Suppoſition or other make the Characters of the Firſt Apologiſts conſiſtent. Either They were *Impoſters*, who wickedly attempted to deceive Mankind with *falſe* Pretenſions; or their Pretenſions were *real*, and their Claim to Miraculous Powers ſure and well grounded. Here therefore the Objection againſt Dr. *M*'s Scheme recurs in its full Force, that "no Suſpicion of Craft can "reaſonably be entertained againſt Perſons "of ſuch exalted Piety, who expoſed Themſelves to Perſecution, and even to Martyr-"dom in Confirmation of the Truth of "what They taught." This proves their *Sincerity*; and their Sincerity ſuppoſed, the *Reality* of their Claims will follow of Courſe, for They had no ſuch falſe Doctrines or prevaricating Arts amongſt them to deceive themſelves, or to induce them to the Attempt of deceiving Others.

There is ſtill Another very material Difference between the Aſſertors of Miraculous Powers in the *Primitive Church*, and Thoſe in the preſent *Romiſh Communion*, which will utterly deſtroy Mr. *T*'s intended Parallel. He ſays, the Suppoſition that the Latter do not believe their own Pretence of Miracles, is a Proof that even good Men, Confeſſors and Martyrs,

may

may for *Reaſons of Expediency* concur in countenancing and propagating of Falſhood. Now the *Reaſons of Expediency* in the Romiſh Church are very viſible. They have an *uſurped* Power to maintain, and many *gainful* Superſtitions to ſupport, and the Propagation of the Belief of Miracles aids the Continuance of many *additional* and many *abſurd* Doctrines and Practices, which could not ſtand the Teſt of Reaſon and Scripture. Their Belief that the outward Splendor of their Church, and the Authority of their Supreme Head, are the greateſt Good to be conſulted upon Earth, with their forementioned Opinion, that all Means are lawful which conduce to this End, may eaſily lead them to think it *expedient*, that theſe ſhould be promoted even by a groundleſs Pretence to Miraculous Powers, which, Humanly ſpeaking, could ſcarce be ſupported any other Way. But the Queſtion is, what like *Reaſons of Expediency* had the Primitive Chriſtians to prevaricate in this Manner, and to countenance and propagate a Falſhood? They had none of theſe *temporal* Advantages to tempt them to it. They had no ſuch external Pomp of Worſhip, no infallible Head, no lucrative Arts founded on falſe Doctrines, to ſupport by this Pretence. They had no Perſonal Views, no Self-Eſteem, or appropriated Ho-

nours

nours to ſecure by this Claim, as appears by that very Circumſtance which has been turned into an Objection againſt them, that They ſeldom take any Notice, never any particular Notice of *themſelves*, but chooſe rather to dwell on the Attainments of their *meaneſt Brethren*, and repreſent the Argument in its ſtrongeſt Force by inſiſting on it with Reſpect to *them*. In ſhort, They had Nothing but Truth to maintain, and That, as Mr. T. obſerves, can never want the Aſſiſtance of Falſhood. They would not only have abhorred the Uſe of *ſuch Means* to promote *any End*, but They really had *no ſuch End* to promote at all by *any Means*. Falſe Pretenſions might do them infinite Prejudice, but could do them no poſſible Service. All the *Reaſons of Expediency* as well as of Duty and Obligation, lay on the Other Side, and would determine them to avoid all groundleſs Claims. Their Perſonal Security, and the Succeſs of their Endeavours in propagating the Goſpel, as well as their Salvation hereafter, according to their own Doctrine, all depended on their *Fidelity* in ſpeaking the Truth to the beſt of their Knowlege, and making no ſuch Pretenſions, unleſs they were indeed well-grounded. If They were detected, They brought ſure Deſtruction on Themſelves upon the very Terms of their own Propoſal, and ſuch a

heavy

heavy Scandal and Imputation on the Religion which They profeſſed, as would darken and diſcredit all the other Evidences of it, and of Courſe hinder the Propagation of it; and in Conſequence of this were hurried by a ſpeedy Vengeance here to account before their Maſter for ſuch heinous Abuſe of his Holy Name and Doctrine. All this Guilt and Hazard They are ſuppoſed to incur, for What? For Nothing; for no imaginable Reaſon which can be aſſigned for ſo wicked and fooliſh an Attempt. A bare *Poſſibility* of it is ſuggeſted, becauſe an Inſtance may be given of other Men of different Principles and Practices, and in a different Situation, who are ſuppoſed to countenance *Pious Frauds*, conſiſtently with a very good and pious Intention in general. Whereas the true State of the Caſe, upon Examination, appears to be this. The *Primitive Chriſtians*, if They wilfully falſified, could expect Nothing but to ſuffer Death here, and everlaſting Puniſhment hereafter; and conſidering the Vigilance, and Malice, and Sagacity of their Enemies, They could ſcarce fail of being diſcovered and expoſed by Men as well as by the Searcher of Hearts. Whereas the *Papiſts*, according to their Management and their Notions, are ſafe in both Reſpects in ſuch an Attempt. They are ſure, in the Manner They claim

and

and exerciſe their Miraculous Powers, of not being detected, and Thoſe amongſt Themſelves who ſuſpect the Reality of them, dare not own their Suſpicions: Or if They were accidentally detected, They have no Puniſhment, and but little Shame to fear, ſince the Merit of a *good Intention* would be their Plea and Excuſe, and the Doctrine of their Church would juſtify the Lawfulneſs of the Fraud. The ſame Doctrine is a Guard againſt all Apprehenſion of future Vengeance for ſuch an Attempt; and thus They have both ſecular and ſpiritual Conſiderations to biaſs their Judgment, and influence their Conduct, in the Patronage of pious Frauds, which are no way applicable to the Caſe of the *Primitive Fathers*. Yet This is the boaſted Parallel, introduced with ſuch Solemnity as if it was deciſive; brought on gradually by preparatory Interrogatories, like ſome great Diſcovery, which was to ſolve the whole Difficulty, and reconcile the groſs Inconſiſtency of charging thoſe Holy Martyrs of moſt exalted Piety with wilful Prevarication, and a deep premeditated and continued Forgery. Whereas the only Point in common between thoſe Early Advocates for Popery, and the Members of the Romiſh Church at this Day is the external Profeſſion of Chriſtianity: Their Notion of its *Doctrine* is as contrary as Light

and

and Darkneſs, and They differ in every other Reſpect which could have ſupported the intended Parallel. Their Opinions with Regard to this very Point of *doing Evil that Good may come*, and ſupporting Truth by a well meant Fraud, were abſolutely contradictory; Their Thoughts of implicit Obedience to Eccleſiaſtical Authority againſt the plain Rules of the Goſpel were widely repugnant; Their Manner of propoſing their Claims to Examination were totally different; Their Inducements and *Reaſons of Expediency* were directly oppoſite; nor can Any Caſe be propoſed, wherein there was a greater Variety of all the material Circumſtances.

The Laſt Objection propoſed, with the Intent of obviating it, by Dr. *M.* was, that "to reject the unanimous Teſtimony of the "Fathers, in their Reports of the Primitive "Miracles, will deſtroy the Faith and Credit "of all Hiſtory." I took into Examination all the Heads of the Dr's Anſwer, and ſhewed that they did not clear his Scheme of this Objection. Mr. *Toll* on this Occaſion obſerves his uſual Method, and inſtead of entering into the *Argument*, vouchſafes to give us his *Opinion*. He "claims the Privilege of thinking that "Dr. *M.* has ſo fully and ſolidly refuted this "Objection, that Nothing can be added to "make it clearer:—And adds, that tho' I

"have

" have given a copious Reply, the Perti-
" tinency of it, or of any Part of it, is far
" from being clear to Him." (P. 92.) It may be ſo, but I may claim the Privilege likewiſe of obſerving that the Cenſure intended, if it were of any Force, would fall on Dr. *M.* If my Reflections on this Head were not pertinent to the Subject, His muſt ſuffer the ſame Imputation, for I followed him cloſely in his Remarks on this Point. I will review them once more on this Occaſion.

His principal Diſtinction was, that " the
" Hiſtory of Miracles is of a Kind totally
" different from that of common Events,
" the One to be ſuſpected always of Courſe,
" without the ſtrongeſt Evidence to con-
" firm it; the other to be admitted of
" Courſe without as ſtrong Reaſon to ſuſ-
" pect it;—that a Weak Man, who if Ho-
" neſt, may atteſt common Events, as cre-
" dibly as the Wiſeſt, yet can hardly make
" any Report, that is credible, of ſuch as
" are miraculous, becauſe a Suſpicion will al-
" ways occur, that his Weakneſs and Im-
" perfect Knowlege of the Extent of Human
" Art, had been impoſed upon by the Craft
" of cunning Jugglers; that on the other
" Hand, ſhould a Man of known Abilities
" and Judgment relate to Us Things miracu-

" lous, or undertake to perform them " Himſelf, the very Notion of his Skill, " without an Aſſurance alſo of his Integrity, " would excite only the greater Suſpicion " of Him; eſpecially if He had any Intereſt " to promote, or any favourite Opinion to " recommend, by the Authority of ſuch " Works: becauſe a Pretenſion to Miracles " has in all Ages and Nations, been found " the moſt effectual Inſtrument of Impoſtors, " towards deluding the Multitude, and gain- " ing their Ends upon them." (*Free Inquiry*, P. 217, 218.) And He goes on in the following Pages, on the Strength of theſe Principles, to obſerve that Men may and do, in the Peruſal of all ancient Hiſtories, readily and conſiſtently reject all the *miraculous Part*, and admit the Reſt. Now before I conſidered the Subſtance of this Reaſoning, I obſerved, that it was in general a Conceſſion, that the Hiſtory of Miracles, tho' not of common Events, would be hurt by his Arguments; and tho' He is not diſturbed about it, " how far " ſoever the Conſequences may reach," yet it appeared to me to be a Conceſſion, which might reaſonably alarm all ſincere Chriſtians. It was putting in the Mouths of Unbelievers ſuch an Objection to the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, as I thought might well excite the Attention and Concern of all who believe that Hiſtory,

Hiſtory, and who think the Welfare of Mankind depends upon the Belief of it. And I find I am not ſingular in this Apprehenſion. This Conſequence has been ſo well repreſented as flowing naturally to the Prejudice of the Goſpel from thoſe Principles, by a late excellent Writer, that I ſhall take the Liberty to tranſcribe ſome of his Words. "I make no Queſtion," ſays He, "but that "Every Unbeliever thinks He has a Right "to conſider the Apoſtles of Chriſt as *weak* "*Men*, and will it not then be very natu-"ral for ſuch a One to reply to a Chriſtian, "when He appeals to the New Teſtament "to prove the Miracles of Chriſt, in ſome "ſuch Manner as this? *viz.* We receive "your Hiſtory ſo far as it contains an Ac-"count of common Events; but ſo far as "it contains a Hiſtory of Miracles We reject "it. Is it not thus that We muſt diſtin-"guiſh in reading all common Hiſtories, "unleſs We will ſuffer Ourſelves to be "impoſed upon?" There is not a ſingle Hiſtorian of Antiquity, whether *Greek* or *Latin*, who has not recorded "Oracles, Prodigies, Prophecies, and Miracles, *&c.*" and thus He ſuppoſes Him to go on repeating the Subſtance of Dr. *M*'s Arguments, in his own Words, and inſiſting on the Diſtinction of rejecting of Courſe all Accounts

of Miracles, and admitting of Courſe all Reports of common Events.---This Author then proceeds thus, "Whatever there be "in this, it is certain that the Argument lies "as ſtrong againſt the Goſpel as againſt "any other Hiſtory; for why may not an "Unbeliever go on and ſay,---Thus alſo in "the Narrative of the Acts of *Jeſus Chriſt*, "the Points of Hiſtory are, that He took "upon Himſelf to be a Prophet, and inſti-"tuted a New Religion, for which he was "cruelly put to Death by the *Jews*. Theſe "Facts, and whatever other ordinary Oc-"currences are recorded in his Hiſtory, We "admit. But We pauſe at the Miracles, "which are ſaid to have been wrought in "his Favour, either when He was living, "or after He was Dead; for They were "weak Men that recorded them, and a "weak Man can hardly make any Report, "that is credible of ſuch Events as are "miraculous." (Dr. *Stebbing*'s *Boyle*'s Lectures, P. 391, *&c.*) Dr. *M.* muſt, on his own Principles, be at a Loſs for a proper Reply to theſe Objections, when thus retorted on Him by an Unbeliever; for ſhould He ſay, that the Apoſtles were not weak Men, but Perſons of known Abilities and Judgment, then the Suſpicion ariſing from their Skill would again be retorted on Him,

and

and it might be ſaid that They were intereſted in their Pretenſions, and had ſome favourite Opinions to recommend, by the Authority of ſuch Works. What is juſtly to be ſaid in Anſwer to this, may as juſtly be ſaid in Defence of the Primitive Fathers, and the preſent Remark is this, that He could not conſiſtently with what he has advanced on this Point, defend the Hiſtory of the Goſpel againſt this Kind of Oppoſition. The Argument is levelled againſt the Credibility of all *miraculous* Events, and is of as much Force in the one Caſe as in the other.

I obſerved in the next Place that the ſame Principles were as applicable to the Caſe of common Events, and were introductive of univerſal Scepticiſm. For by the ſame Evaſions may One defeat the Credit of any Report, not only that is offered upon the Faith of paſt Hiſtory, but even that is offered upon the Teſtimony of preſent Witneſſes. One might obſerve to this Purpoſe, that Many Falſe Reports have, thro' the Credulity of Some, and the Craft of Others, obtained in the World; that if the Witneſſes were weak Men, They might be impoſed upon, and that if they were Wiſe ones, They might impoſe upon Us, and that their Intereſt, or ſome favourite Opinion

being connected with it, did of Course destroy the Credibility of the Account. This is the Course of the Dr's Arguments against the Testimony offered for the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church, and it may be urged with just as much Force against any other ancient History, or against all History, or against all Reports whatsoever to which We were not Witnesses Ourselves, as against this. The Dr. Himself elsewhere seemed not only to allow this, but to insist upon it, in a Passage which I cited from Him on this Occasion as fully expressive of his Meaning, and plainly subversive of the Faith of all History. "The Credibility of Witnesses," says He, "depends on "a Variety of Principles wholly concealed "from Us, and tho' in many Cases it may "reasonably be presumed, yet in None can "it be certainly known: (Pref. P. 9, 10.) and then He goes on to argue from the Craft and Selfishness of Some, and the Weakness and Credulity of Others, that Nothing is to be depended on but plain Facts; which, as I observed, must be such as fall under the Evidence of our own Senses; or else all the Difficulties concerning Testimony will again return upon Us. This was totally overthrowing all the Credit of all Reports, and confining our Faith

to our own Experience. This Paſſage referred to, certainly wanted ſome Vindication or Limitation, but Mr. *T.* thought fit to paſs it over without any Attempt to clear the Senſe of it, or diſprove this Conſequence as flowing from it.

Dr. *M.* proceeded from *Reaſon* to *Fact*, and obſerv'd, that " tho' there had been Contemners " of Miracles in all Ages, yet that Hiſtory " had maintained its Ground thro' them all." I anſwered that the Difference of the Event lay not in the Difference of the Evidence, but in the Inclinations and Luſts of Mankind; and that this Obſervation affects not the Objection in View. The proper Queſtion is, whether the ſame Arguments are not applicable in all Caſes, and whether a compleat Sceptick might not reaſonably conteſt with the Dr. on his own Principles, the moſt eſtabliſhed Parts of Hiſtory.

Dr. *M.* added, that " if this was the " Meaning of the Objection, that the ſame " Principles which induce Us to ſuſpect " the Primitive Miracles, muſt induce Us " alſo, if We are conſiſtent with Ourſelves, " to ſuſpect every Thing which is deliver- " ed to Us from ancient Hiſtory; the " Matter is widely miſtaken; for that the " Hiſtory of Miracles is of a Kind totally " different from that of common Facts,

" the One always to be ſuſpected of Courſe,
" without the ſtrongeſt Evidence to con-
" firm it; the other to be admitted of Courſe,
" without as ſtrong Reaſon to ſuſpect it." I replied particularly to all theſe ſeveral Suggeſtions. I obſerved that the Hiſtory of Miracles was not of a *Kind* totally different from that of common Facts;---that they were both the Objects of Senſe, and that a plain honeſt Man might be a very credible Witneſs in the one Caſe as well as in the other;---that however, allowing that ſtronger Evidence was required to confirm the Hiſtory of Miracles than of other Events, ſuch ſuperior Evidence was accordingly granted in the Queſtion before Us; and the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church was confirmed to Us by ſuch Teſtimony as was beyond Exception. The Diſintereſtedneſs, the Multiplicity, the Unanimity of the Witneſſes in ſo many Parts of the World, without one repugnant Teſtimony, excludes the Objection from the ſuppoſed Weakneſs of any particular Perſon, and muſt drive an Objector to the candid Suppoſition of their being all *Fools* or *Knaves*, before He can make a Step towards eluding the Force of their concurring Verdict in this Caſe. " And This," I obſerved, " might re-
" mind Us of the great Inequality of thoſe Teſ-
" timonies,

"timonies, which Dr. *M.* has *parallell'd*, "when He mentions the Tradition of ſin-"gle Miracles wrought long before, as re-"ported by Heathen Writers, or by Popiſh "Ones, as a Circumſtance weakening the "Belief of thoſe which are ſpoken of as "of their own certain Knowlege, and of "daily Triumph, by a long Succeſſion of "Writers." (*Free Anſwer*, P. 130.) Under this Head again Mr. *T.* has totally miſtaken the Point which it lay upon Him to defend. "The ſole Queſtion, He ſays, is, whe-"ther an Hiſtorian may not be to be cre-"dited in his Relation of common Facts, "that may deſerve no Credit at all in the "Account He gives of Miracles." But this was neither the *ſole* nor the *Principal* Queſtion under this Head. Tho' it be allowed that This may in many Inſtances be the Caſe, yet the Objection would ſtill hold as ſtrong againſt Dr. *M.* that "to reject the "*unanimous* Teſtimony of the Fathers in "their Reports of the Primitive Miracles, "will deſtroy the Faith and Credit of all "Hiſtory." The plain Reaſon is, that no "Point of Hiſtory is *better* atteſted, and "ſcarce any *equally* atteſted, as is This of "the Continuance of Miracles in the Pri-"mitive Church; which cannot be ſaid of "any particular Inſtances given by particular "Writers.

"Writers." The Fathers ſpeak of theſe miraculous Gifts as *abounding* amongſt them; They ſpeak of them as abounding *in all Places*; They offer them to *publick Examination*; They call on their *Adverſaries*, Perſons prejudiced againſt them, and perſecuting them for ſuch Pretenſions, to look into the Evidence, and offer to ſtake their Lives on the Conſequence. Is this Evidence to be parallell'd with *Vertot*'s Mention of *the Sacred Vial?* Or does it follow, that becauſe we may reject that Account, without deſtroying the Credit of the Reſt of his Hiſtory, that therefore We may reject the united Teſtimony of all the Fathers in a Caſe which They muſt know the Truth of, which They deſired their Perſecutors to diſprove, which thoſe Perſecutors were intereſted to diſprove; which the Apologiſts ſubmitted to all Hazards to ſupport, and which yet They had no Intereſt to ſupport, if they were not true; nay which They had many Obligations and Motives to detect, if they were Falſe; Is the Rejection of a Point ſo well atteſted, attended with all the Circumſtances which are allowed in other Caſes to exclude the Probability or Poſſibility of an Impoſture, a Thing of as much Indifference to the Faith of Hiſtory as the ſetting aſide a particular Inſtance of a Miracle

racle in a particular Author, where We can eaſily account for either Suppoſition, of his being *deceived* Himſelf, or of his *intending to deceive* Us. Mr. *T.* is pleaſed here to ſay, after repeating Dr. *M*'s Obſervation, that We might as well ſay that by rejecting the Authority of Mr. *De Vertot* in this Story, We deſtroy the Faith of all his other Stories, that "truly Mr. *D.* does not ſay one "Syllable to it, which looks very much, "as if he was conſcious of the Force of "it." (P. 93.) On the contrary I had in very expreſs Terms obviated the Force of it, by ſpecifying particularly *the great Inequality of thoſe Teſtimonies* which Dr. *M.* had paralleli'd, when He mentioned the Tradition of ſingle Miracles wrought long before, as reported by Heathen Writers, or by Popiſh ones, as a Circumſtance weakening the Belief of Thoſe, which are ſpoken of, as of their own certain Knowlege, and of daily Triumph, by a long Succeſſion of Writers. I enlarged on this Diſtinction in ſeveral ſucceeding Pages, and ſhewed the Advantage ariſing to the Teſtimony of the Fathers in this Article from their *Concurrence* in this Claim in all Parts, their *Diſintereſtedneſs* in ſuch a Claim, their *open Publication* of it to all Inquirers, and their *final Succeſs* in ſuch a Situation. Theſe were Circumſtances,

ſtances, which greatly diſtinguiſh their Account of the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Primitive Church from any later Account of any particular Miracle, and We may therefore reject the latter without endangering the Faith of all Hiſtory, tho' We cannot reject the former but on ſuch Principles as may as well be brought to overthrow the Belief of every Thing which We were not Witneſſes to Ourſelves. If General Inſinuations of the *Weakneſs* of One Part of Mankind, and the *Craft* of the Other, are ſufficient to overthrow ſuch Teſtimony, and ſo circumſtanced, as is that of the Primitive Fathers in the Caſe before Us, it may be equally applied to Every Thing which We did not ſee Ourſelves; and will be applied ſo, when Men have any Intereſt to ſerve in conteſting any Point of Hiſtory; which will render the whole precarious and uncertain; which I ſuppoſe to have been the Meaning of the Objection.

I ſhall now leave it to the Publick to determine, *whoſe Forces*, upon the Review, appear to be *weak, diſjointed, and ill-armed.* If Mr. *T.* is diſpoſed to *defend* the Dr. again in the ſame Manner, by *omitting* many, and *miſtaking* moſt of the Points in Diſpute, and from thence to raiſe again

ſuch

ſuch Self-Congratulations, I ſhall leave Him to triumph in Security; for I am not of his Opinion that it is worth while to write a Book, merely to ſhew that Another Perſon has wrote Nothing to the Purpoſe, unleſs One can add Something to clear and ſupport the main Argument.

AN

ANSWER

TO

Dr. MIDDLETON'S

VINDICATION

OF

FREE INQUIRY.

THE foregoing Reply was finished just at the Time that the News-Papers informed me of the Death of Dr. Middleton. The Publication of it was delayed upon the Report that immediately prevailed of a Posthumous Vindication to be expected from the Dr. Himself. I was willing to see how far He approved of the Defence, which had been offered for Him;

to

AN ANSWER TO Dr. *MIDDLETON*'s VINDICATION OF THE *FREE INQUIRY.*

THE foregoing *Reply* was finiſhed juſt at the Time that the News-Papers informed me of the Death of Dr. *Middleton.* The Publication of it was delayed upon the Report that immediately prevailed of a Poſthumous Vindication to be expected from the Dr. Himſelf. I was willing to ſee how far He approved of the *Defence*, which had been offered for Him; to

to join the Review of Both, and to take my Leave at once of this Controverſy.

Thoſe who ventured to deliver their Sentiments in Publick in Oppoſition to Dr. *M*'s *Free Inquiry*, were I ſuppoſe ſufficiently apprehenſive of the ſevereſt Returns, which Wit and Learning could dictate; but did not perhaps expect ſuch mean Reflections and abuſive Expreſſions as uſually ariſe from Writers of a lower Claſs. But when I reflect that He has beſtowed them very freely, though not equally, on a Perſon, whoſe Abilities and Learning are above all Cenſure; and whoſe candid Treatment of Him in Particular deſerved a very different Return, I begin to conſider them as honourable Teſtimonials, as Supplements in the Room of Real Argument: Had Dr. *M.* been ſtill Living to anſwer for Himſelf, his Style would have deſerved farther Notice and Cenſure; but at preſent I will uſe it only as a Caution againſt the ſame Error, will endeavour as far as his own State of the Caſe will permit, to avoid any Perſonal Reflection, and to confine Myſelf to the Argument only.

I cannot think it Any Reflection on the Adverſaries whom He has ſelected to anſwer, that They did not abide by their own Judgment in this Caſe, but acted by the

Advice

Advice of Friends, and profeſſed to do ſo. Had Dr. *M.* uſed the ſame Precaution, his Performance had probably been leſs exceptionable. As to my own, A *Letter* wrote with the Freedom, and for the Uſe of a private Friend, might well be thought to need ſuch an Apology, which was therefore with great Truth, and I think with no Impropriety offered. Indeed I little thought that what I took to be a modeſt and neceſſary Excuſe for troubling the World with my Performance, could be cenſured as the Effect of Pride, and called *puffing my Works a priori*. At leaſt Dr. *M.* might have ſpared ſuch a Cenſure, who boaſts ſo loudly of the favourable Reception his Performance has met with both among the Clergy and the Laity, and the general Approbation it has every where received from thoſe whoſe Authority He chiefly values, (Pref. P. 1.) Dr. *Church*'s Vindication is ſo full, ſo compleat, and accurate, as will do Credit to the Judgment of thoſe Friends who induced Him to oblige the World with it; had it been publiſhed ſooner, it had preſerved me from this Opportunity of falling under the Dr's Cenſure.

The next Charge is attended with greater Uneaſineſs. It muſt be difficult for the Perſons concerned to ſee a learned Body publickly cenſured for their Sakes, when it is their

 higheſt

higheſt Ambition to deſerve the Honours which it has conferred; and it cannot be leſs Uneaſy to attempt a Vindication of it in this Reſpect. I will only obſerve that Dr. *M*'s Reflections are founded on a Miſtake in *Fact*. This was not the firſt Occaſion, on which either of the Perſons ſo honoured had commenced Authors; nor was this the *ſole* Reaſon aſſigned in the Form of conferring them, for which theſe Honours were beſtowed on either.

But Dr. *M.* ſays, (P. 2, 3.) "it has fallen "out very unluckily, that before the Colla-"tion of theſe Honours, one of the very "Books, on the Account of which They "were given, was effectually confuted; and "that the Confutation of either may be "very juſtly applied to them both." Here He was ſomewhat miſtaken in his Intelligence, (and ſince Parties in the Controverſy aſſume a deciſive Voice, why may not I take the ſame Liberty, and ſay) and in his Judgment alſo. The foregoing Papers are referred to in Juſtification of the Aſſertion, as far as it concerns Myſelf, but I can by no Means allow, that a ſuppoſed Confutation of my Anſwer, would equally involve Dr. *Church*'s *Vindication*, who has added many material Obſervations in Relation to this Subject.

Dr. *M*'s firſt Attempt in his own Vindication is to clear ſome Paſſages in his *Preface*, which have been objected to as foreign or ſuſpicious, unintelligible or dangerous. "He "is perſwaded that no Explication of them "can be wanted by any diſintereſted Reader, "as well as that None, which He ſhall give, "will ever ſatisfy thoſe, who now demand "it." (P. 6.) In the firſt Part at leaſt He is miſtaken, for his *Defender*, whom He has hereby owned, gave up the principal Point as *obſcure*, and on that Account waved the *Defence* of it; and I ſuppoſe He allowed *Him* to be a *diſintereſted* Reader: In the latter He has ſo far judged Right, as that the Explication, which He has thought fit to give, does by no Means prove ſatisfactory.

He obſerves that I "appear ſcandalized "by the Title of *Revelation*, which He had "given to that Diſcovery, which God made "of Himſelf in the viſible Works of his "Creation. Yet, ſays He, it is no other, "than what the Wiſe in All Ages have gi-"ven to it, *&c.*" I never think it worth while to diſpute about *Words*, where the *Meaning* is clearly expreſſed; but ſhould Any Man tell me, that He believed in *Revelation*, and upon Enquiry ſhould afterwards explain Himſelf, that He thought that the wonderful Fabric and Conſtitution of worldly

Things demonſtrated the Being and Attributes of God, I ſhould think not only that He talked *improperly*, but that He actually intended to *deceive* me; as He certainly would have done without this farther Explication. I will not deny, but that All Knowlege, which is communicated to Us, may in ſome Senſe be ſaid to be *revealed*, as conveying Notions to the Mind which were not *imprinted* there before; and in this Senſe the Word may have been uſed, without Danger of Error, by Thoſe who have diſcourſed on the natural Ways and Means of attaining Knowlege. But when the Manifeſtation of the *Will of God*, as a *Law* to his Rational Creatures, is the Subject of Diſcourſe, here the Term of *Revelation* bears an appropriated Senſe, and is ever uſed to ſignify that Knowlege, which has been communicated by *ſupernatural* Interpoſition, to ſupply the Defects, or correct the Errors of their natural Light. In this View it is uſed in Contradiſtinction to thoſe Deductions of *Reaſon*, which are drawn from the *Conſtitution of Nature*, and was therefore very improperly introduced in a Diſcourſe on *Miracles*, to ſignify that Light, which God gave of Himſelf from the Beginning, and placed continually before our Eyes in the wonderful

wonderful Works and beautiful Fabric of this viſible World.

Dr. *M.* adds that "the Wiſe in all Ages "have not only given the Title of *Revelation* "to the Diſcovery which God made of "Himſelf in the viſible Works of his Cre-"ation, but have alſo conſidered it as the "moſt authentic and indiſputable Revela-"tion, which God has ever given of Him-"ſelf from the Beginning of the World "to this Day. It was this, ſays He, by "which the Firſt Notice of Him was re-"vealed to the Inhabitants of the Earth; "and by which alone it has been kept up "ever ſince, among all the ſeveral Nations "of it. From this the Reaſon of Man "was enabled, to trace out his Nature and "Attributes, and by a gradual Deduction "of Conſequences to learn his own Nature "alſo, with all the Duties belonging to it, "which relate either to God or his Fel-"low-Creatures." (P. 7.) Now I cannot aſſent to all this, becauſe the *Scripture*, which is the Rule of my Faith, teaches me a very different Scheme. It has made it queſtionable, whether the Conſtitution of Nature yielded the *Firſt* Notice of the Exiſtence of a God; and it has made it unqueſtionable, that it was not the *only* Means, by which it has ever ſince been kept up a-

mong all the ſeveral Nations of the World. *Adam* had probably immediate Information concerning the Author and End of his Being, before He had traced it out by *argumentative* Conſequences, from Reflections on Himſelf, and the Things around Him; and it is certain that He afterwards enjoyed frequent and extraordinary Methods of Intercourſe with the Deity. His Children therefore did not receive their firſt Notice of the Deity by Argumentations from the Conſtitution of Nature, but by Inſtruction from their Parent; and as *Revelations*, that is, *ſupernatural* Manifeſtations of the Will of God, were renewed and repeated in the Patriarchal Age, *their* Children likewiſe in their Education enjoyed the Benefit of ſuch Knowlege, and thus All Nations deſcended from them have had the Advantage of *Traditional Revelation* to aid and aſſiſt their natural Reaſon. The Intercourſe and Communication of Many People with the Children of *Iſrael*, amongſt whom theſe Revelations were continued, was a farther Help, and may ſhew that it was not owing to a View of the Fabric of the World *alone*, that Men retained any Senſe of God, or of their Duty to Him.

It is added, "This Conſtitution of Things "was ordained by God as an univerſal Law

"or

"or Rule of Conduct to Man; the Source "of all his Knowlege; the Teſt of all Truth; "by which all ſubſequent Revelations, "which are ſuppoſed to have been given "by God in any other Manner, muſt be "tried, and cannot be received as Divine, "any farther than as they are found to "tally and coincide with this Original "Standard." This, inſtead of clearing the ſuſpicious Paſſages already cenſured, is Opening the Way to a new Controverſy; new I mean in Relation to the preſent Queſtion, tho' not many Years ſince it was the Subject of a very conſiderable Debate; and was urged as the principal Objection againſt the *Neceſſity* or *Expediency* of any *Revelation*. The Subſtance of what is here advanced is refuted by an Argument, which is uſually a favourite one with Dr. *M.* that of plain *Experience*. Men could not from a View of the Fabrick of the World trace out ſuch a Syſtem, as ſhould be the Source of all Knowlege, and the Teſt of all Truth; and in Fact They did not. There is ſurely a great Impropriety in ſaying, that "This "Conſtitution of Things was ordained by God "as an univerſal Law or Rule of Conduct "to Man." This wonderful Fabric and Conſtitution of Worldly Things was Nothing more than the *Object of his Senſes*,

from whence He was by his *Reaſon* to trace out the Will of God, which only could be called a *Law* or *Rule of Conduct* to Himſelf: And here his *Reaſon*, whatever was the Occaſion, prov'd inſufficient to the Purpoſe, and was *not* "enabled to trace out "the Divine Nature and Attributes, and by "a gradual Deduction of Conſequences to "learn his own Nature alſo, with all the "Duties belonging to it, which relate either "to God, or his Fellow-Creatures." Whatever might have been hoped or conjectured in *Speculation* on this Subject, yet the firſt View of Mankind in their ſeveral Situations, the leaſt Acquaintance with their Opinions and Practices in preſent and paſt Times, muſt convince Us, that this Suppoſition is entirely groundleſs; and that Thoſe, who had no Light but what was drawn from their own Reaſonings on the Conſtitution of Things, fell into Notions and Practices, which not only were not the Teſt of all Truth, but which were indeed the Diſgrace and Reproach of Human Nature. And this was the Caſe not locally and accidentally, but in many very material Points uniformly and univerſally.

The plain Queſtions ariſing from what is here ſuggeſted are theſe, whether the Religion of Nature deducible from a View

of the Conſtitution of it, be abſolutely perfect; whether it be diſcoverable by every Man, for if it be not it cannot to Him be the Teſt of all Truth; and whether it be more eaſily and perfectly diſcoverable than the Proof and Meaning of any Revelation can be. If Any want Satisfaction in theſe important Points, They cannot fail, I think, of receiving it in that clear State of the Caſe, and unanſwerable Deciſion of the Queſtions, which the preſent learned Biſhop of *Briſtol* has offered in his excellent *Defence of Revelation*. Such *Perſpicuity* in Conjunction with ſuch forcible *Reaſoning* is a peculiar Felicity, and having ſo happily been employed on this Subject, has rendered unneceſſary the Attempt of inferior Pens on this Argument, and ought to have obviated the Repetition of theſe Inſinuations.

Dr. *M.* ſays He referred to this Law deducible from the wonderful Works of the Creation to aſſiſt his Readers in "diſcovering the genuine Way which God Himſelf has marked out to Us for the Acquiſition of true Knowlege, not from the "Authority, or the Reports of our Fellow-"Creatures, but from the Information of the "Facts, and material Objects, which, in "his providential Diſtribution of Worldly "Things, He hath preſented to the per-

"petual

"tual Obſervation of our Senſes." Now is there not here again a ſtrange Confuſion of Argument, or Miſtake of Fact? Can it be ſaid with Truth, that the genuine Way, which God has marked out to Us for the Acquiſition of true Knowlege, is not from the Authority or Reports of our Fellow-Creatures? Is it not remarkably otherwiſe? Is it not the Wiſe Diſpoſition of Providence, that We are ſo brought into the World, that We receive our firſt Notices of Duty merely by Authority and Report, by the Inſtruction of Parents, before We are able to make Inferences and Obſervations on the Formation of the natural World, and on the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of the Creator there-in manifeſted? Do We not by this providential Method of Education know much of the proper *Return of Duty* to our Maker, before We ſhould in the other Way have traced out of Ourſelves his Exiſtence from his Works? And can it then be ſaid, that the Authority and Reports of our Fellow-Creatures are not the genuine Way marked out by God for the Acquiſition of true Knowlege? Nay, had this Caſe been otherwiſe, had We learned our firſt Knowlege from the Information of Facts and material Objects, how would it follow from hence, that becauſe God has *given Us one* Means of

Knowlege,

Knowlege, therefore He intended to *exclude another*, and meant that We ſhould not depend on the Authority and Report of our Fellow-Creatures? Above All, how was this Principle conſiſtent in One, who believed that *Jeſus* and his Apoſtles worked Miracles in Atteſtation of the Goſpel, the Evidence of which to future Ages muſt depend on Authority and Report? Might not an Unbeliever retort the Obſervation againſt the Miracles of the Goſpel, and inſiſt that this was not the genuine Way marked out by God, for the Acquiſition of true Knowlege, which was to be had from a View of the Fabric of the World? Was there ever ſuch an Apology offered to vindicate a Man from the Imputation of *Deiſm*, by ſaying no more than a Deiſt might and would have ſaid, and in the Manner too in which They uſually do ſay it?

Dr. *M.* adds, that He had another View likewiſe in the ſame Paſſages, and applicable to the End, of giving the "Reader a "more inlarged Notion of the Queſtion in "Diſpute, who, by turning his Thoughts "to reflect on the Works of the Creator, "as they are manifeſted to Us in this Fa-"bric of the World, could not fail to ob-"ſerve, that they were All of them great, "noble and ſuitable to the Majeſty of his "Nature;

"Nature; carrying with them the Proofs
"of their Origin, and ſhewing themſelves
"to be the Productions of an All-wiſe and
"All-mighty Being; and by accuſtoming
"his Mind to theſe ſublime Reflections,
"He will be prepared to determine, whe-
"ther thoſe miraculous Interpoſitions, ſo
"confidently affirmed to Us by the Primi-
"tive Fathers, can reaſonably be thought
"to make a Part in the grand Scheme of
"the Divine Adminiſtration; or, whether
"it be agreeable, that God, who created
"all Things by his Will, and can give what
"Turn to them He pleaſes by the ſame
"Will; ſhould for the particular Purpoſes
"of his Government, and the Service of
"the Church, deſcend to the low Expe-
"dient of Viſions and Revelations; grant-
"ed ſometimes to Boys, for the Inſtructi-
"on of the Elders, and ſometimes to Wo-
"men, to ſettle the Faſhion and Length
"of their Veils, and ſometimes alſo to the
"Paſtors of the Church, to injoin them to
"ordain one Man a Lecturer, another a
"Prieſt, *&c.*" (P. 8.) Now there is only one ſingle Circumſtance again in all this, which may not be retorted upon a Profeſſor of Chriſtianity by an Adverſary. Every One, who believes the Bible, knows that the great God, who made the World, has

not

not thought it beneath his Majesty, for the particular Purposes of his Government, and the Service of his Church, to descend to the Expedient of Visions and Revelations, and even in the Manner and for the Purposes of all the several Instances here selected for Ridicule; except the One Article of *lengthning the Veils*. The Others were parallel'd by Instances in the Old or New Testament, and were therefore very unseasonably produced by a *Believer*, and in an express *Vindication* too of his Belief. I need not insist on the Misrepresentation of granting Visions and Revelations to Boys for the Information of Elders; If it was real, was it any other than happened to *Samuel* for the Reproof of old *Eli*? If Visions and Revelations are said to have been made to *Women* in the Primitive Church, Do We not likewise read in the New Testament of *Virgins that did prophecy*, tho' it is not said in what Manner or for what particular End? And as to the Choice of Officers in the Church, Nothing could well be of more Importance, and it is in the Sacred Writings more than once said to have been the Matter of a particular Divine Designation. If the *Occasion*, on which a miraculous Interposition is reported, appear unworthy of it, and especially after a strict Examination

of

of it in all its Circumſtances. This will be a very material Objection: But is it not moſt unaccountable, that ſuch Examples ſhould be brought as *incredible*, as occur likewiſe in the *Bible*, by One who admits the Authority of it? If his own Arguments were of any Weight they would overthrow the Credit of the Sacred Hiſtory; whereas it was the very Point now in View, the very Buſineſs, which in this Part engaged Dr. *M.* to remove this Objection from his former Performance, and to reconcile his Reference to the Fabric of the World as the ſureſt Inſtruction in all Caſes, with his Belief of any miraculous Interpoſitions. Inſtead of this He has ſtrengthened the Objection by making ſuch an Exception to the Miracles of the Primitive Church, as would be of as much Weight againſt the Miracles of the Goſpel, when it was his very Buſineſs to have pointed out ſome Diſtinction between them to the Prejudice of the former. He has thrown in a farther Inſinuation from the *Viſions of intereſted Prieſts*, but I have already ſhewn how little the *Prieſts* were *intereſted* in ſuch a Fraud before the Civil Eſtabliſhment of Chriſtianity; He adds that theſe Pretences were derided at the very Time by Men of Senſe to whom they were propoſed. This is true of Some of them, and it is as

true

true that the Doctrines of Chriſtianity were derided by them too; but they are not, I hope, the leſs true on that Account.

There follows a Citation from *Cicero* declaring the "true Law to be right Reaſon, "conformable to the Nature of Things, "conſtant, eternal, diffuſed through All, "immutable, *&c.*" This Dr. *M.* ſays, will illuſtrate his Senſe alſo in the exceptionable Paſſages abovementioned, and obſerves, that it is preſerved to Us with a Note of Approbation, by *Lactantius*, the beſt Chriſtian Writer of the third Century. (P. 10.) The Obſervations which I ſhall offer upon it are as follow.

In the Firſt Place, if this Law of right Reaſon was as perfect and immutable, as is repreſented, yet in the only Senſe in which it is ſo, it is not deducible from a View of the Fabric of the World, and therefore this is not an *Illuſtration* but an *Alteration* of the forementioned Aſſertions. If Mankind is not poſſeſſed of this unerring right Reaſon, what ſignifies to them how perfect is that Law ariſing from it, which is beyond their Diſcovery; and which yet cannot be a Law to them any farther than it is diſcoverable by them? The great and mighty Works of Nature, which are referred to, may be allowed to proclaim very convincingly an intelligent

gent and omnipotent Author; but they afford Us very little Light as to the *Rules of our Behaviour* with Reſpect to our Maker, Our Neighbour, or Ourſelves. Here We enter into *Inferences* and *Deductions*, where the Light of Nature preſently fails Us, at leaſt where it did fail the *Heathen World*, for in them We can beſt judge of the Force and Extent of mere Human Reaſon. Enlightned by Revelation *We* can argue in another Manner than *They* did, and are ſometimes apt to miſtake this communicated Knowlege for the Effect of our own Diſcoveries. But will Any One ſay; that this perfect immutable Law of Nature was actually known to the Heathen World? If ſo, whence their Contradictions to each Other, and their Inconſiſtencies in themſelves? Was there ever ſuch a Scheme of natural Religion delineated amongſt them, as We have ſeen among Us? And if there had, yet unleſs it had been univerſally received, the Preſumption formed againſt miraculous Interpoſitions from this Conſideration, could be of no Weight. But in Fact no ſuch perfect Law of right Reaſon was eſtabliſhed amongſt them. The Immoralities, the Follies, the Superſtitions, not merely of the Vulgar, but even of ſeveral of their Inſtructors, were contemptible in one Light, and afflicting in another;

another; and the Schemes of their beſt Philoſophers were uncertain in ſome Points, defective in others, and erroneous in very many. Dr. *M.* indeed ſays, that "this univerſal Law was actually revealed to the "Heathen World, long before the Goſpel "was known to it." If He means that the Fabric of the World was viſible to Them as well as to Us, it is moſt certainly true; but if He means, as He muſt do, to render his Obſervation of any Force to his Argument, that They were able to collect from thence a compleat Rule of Life, this is as certainly falſe. The Ignorance and Abſurdities prevailing almoſt univerſally in the Heathen World, are an unanſwerable Confutation of ſuch an Aſſertion.

Cicero is cited as explaining and confirming this Sentiment. He ſays, "The true "Law is right Reaſon, conformable to the "Nature of Things; conſtant, eternal, diffuſed through all;—not to be over-ruled "by any other, nor abrogated in the whole "or Part, *&c.*" The Subſtance of this Paſſage is this, that whatever is conformable to *right Reaſon*, is in all Caſes to be conſidered as the *Will of God*, and is therefore always equally binding. No Authority can really diſpenſe with it, and No Man, who has any Degree of Conſcience left, can ex-

cuſe Himſelf for the Tranſgreſſion of it. This is a true and a noble Sentiment; but does *Tully* aſſert that this Law of right Reaſon was in all the particular Inſtances of it known to all Men? If He did aſſert it, it was falſe in Fact, and contradicted by the many Confeſſions of the Ignorance and Uncertainty of Mankind, which appear throughout his Writings: If He did not aſſert it, I ſee not how ſuch a general Aſſertion, that whatever is *reaſonable* is always *obligatory*, can illuſtrate or eſtabliſh Dr. *M*'s Argument, that "The Teſtimony of Facts, as "it is offered to our Senſes, in this wonderful Fabric and Conſtitution of Things "may properly be called the Teſtimony of "God Himſelf, as it carries with it the ſureſt "Inſtruction in all Caſes and to all Nations, which in the ordinary Courſe of his "Providence He has thought fit to appoint "for the Conduct of Human Life." I have remarked before on the *ſaving Clauſe* here inſerted, but I do not find that *Tully* explains or teaches this Doctrine, that "the Fabric "of the World carries the ſureſt Inſtruction in all Caſes and to all Nations." He ſays that the Law of right Reaſon is invariable and eternal, binding at all Times and on all Perſons; but He does not ſay that it is diſcoverable by all Perſons from the

the Formation of the World; and if it be not, it can be a *Law* to them no farther than it appears to them. *Other* Methods may convey ſurer Inſtruction to them *what* is *reaſonable* in many Caſes, than this wonderful Fabric and Conſtitution of Things, and by ſo doing may make this Law of right Reaſon more clear, and conſequently more extenſively binding on them.

Dr. *M.* adds, that whatever his Oppoſers may eſteem or call this Paſſage of *Cicero*, cited by Him, yet He "ſhall ever avow it "as the fundamental, eſſential, and vital "Part of all true Religion, and what the "Goſpel muſt adopt, as its beſt Founda-"tion and Support." That there may be no farther Diſpute about Words, it will be proper to be diſtinct and explicit upon this Head. If by this be meant, that the Goſpel muſt be built on this Principle, that "whatever is conformable to right Rea-"ſon muſt always be binding as far as it "is known, and that Nothing can be en-"joined, which is contrary to it," this may readily be admitted; but then Men wanted the Aſſiſtance of *Revelation* to diſcover, what in many Caſes They could not find out of Themſelves, namely, what was agreeable to right Reaſon. But if by this be meant, that the Goſpel pre-ſuppoſes a

preceding compleat Diſcovery of all reaſonable Rules of Life by the Light of Nature, in which it can make no Alterations or Additions, then this is abſolutely falſe in Fact, and profeſſedly contrary to the avowed Intent of this Revelation. This undertook to *turn Us from Darkneſs to Light*, to inſtruct Us in many Points which were unknown or miſunderſtood before; and This it has happily effected in ſome Articles of Morality as well as of Religion.

There is indeed a Senſe, in which the Law of Nature and Religion may be ſaid to be perfect and immutable. It is allowed, that there ariſes a *Fitneſs of Action* from the Relations of Things and Beings, and This being conſidered as the *Will* of that *Almighty Being*, who made and placed them in that Situation, does in that View become a *Law*, or binding Rule of Conduct to all reaſonable Creatures. This Law, or Fitneſs of Action, whilſt Circumſtances continue in all Reſpects the ſame, muſt be as immutable as the Will of God; which in the ſame Situation muſt always intend the ſame Conduct. As this Fitneſs of Action ariſes from the *Conſtitution of Nature*, it may be called the *Law of Nature*; but ſtill it can be no farther a *Law* to Us, than as it appears to Us, and if our *Reaſon* cannot diſcover,

what

what are the ſeveral Relations which We ſtand in to all other Beings, nor what is that Propriety of Action, which reſults from thoſe Relations, We are not the Wiſer for the Eternity and Immutability of that Law, which *Tully* ſpeaks of, but ought thereby to be made the more ſenſible of the Neceſſity of ſome farther Light to point out to Us what is *fit* and *proper*, or in other Words, what is the *Will of God* in our preſent Situation.

But it muſt be obſerved farther, that even this Immutability of the Law of Nature is but *Hypothetical*, and depends on the ſuppoſed Continuance of Mankind in the ſame natural and moral Situation. Should They, by the Permiſſion or Direction of their Maker, fall into any Alteration of Circumſtances, and ſtand in any different Relation to the Author of their Being, or to other Beings, or to each Other, the Rule of Conduct, which ariſes from Relations and Situations, muſt vary likewiſe; and That muſt become fit and proper now, in a new Condition; which was not ſo before. It is always fit and proper, that Reaſonable Creatures ſhould act ſuitably to their Nature and Station; and in this Senſe *Morality* is eternal and immutable; but in *what Inſtances* it muſt be expreſſed, muſt depend on its Suitableneſs to ſuch their Nature and

Station, and cannot therefore be more unchangeable than they are.

With this Caution and Limitation We may admit the Truth of what *Cicero* has here advanced, but I ſee not the leaſt Advantage which it will yield to Dr. *M*'s Cauſe, or his Defence. A Man might acknowlege that whatever was *reaſonable* was *binding*, and was to be conſidered as the *Will of Him* who made and ſo diſpoſed the Conſtitution of Nature, without pretending to point out what was reaſonable in all Caſes; which was the great Point in which Mankind needed Inſtruction, and therefore needed an expreſs Revelation. *Lactantius* conſidered the forementioned Acknowledgment as an extraordinary Diſcovery in a Heathen, but He as expreſſly takes Notice of his Defect in the latter, and points to the very Diſtinction here inculcated. "As," ſays He, "*Cicero* clearly ſaw the Force and "the Ground of the Holy Law, ſo, if He "had known or could have explained its "Precepts alſo, He would then have per-"formed the Part, not of a Philoſopher, "but of a Prophet." This is the true State of the Caſe. Obedience to the *Will of God* is the true Foundation of all Duty and Obligation, and therefore *Tully* in ſo repreſenting it, and in conſidering *Reaſon* as only the *Means* of arriving at the Knowlege of the Divine Will,

Will, ſpoke like a Wiſe, as well as Good Man. But his own great Share of Reaſon was not equal to the Taſk of determining what in all Caſes was *fit* and *proper*, and therefore the *Will of God*; and if it had, yet Others were little able to comprehend his Reaſonings, and little diſpoſed to ſubmit to his Authority; and therefore *Revelation* was in both Reſpects *expedient*, if not abſolutely *neceſſary*.

Let Us briefly review the Occaſion, on which theſe Reaſonings and Citations were introduced. Dr. *M.* in referring to the Fabric of the World as the ſureſt Inſtruction in all Caſes;---in confining our View of what the Creator has actually done, to the Contemplation of the Revelation, which He has made of Himſelf in the wonderful Works and beautiful Fabric of this viſible World;--- and in cenſuring the Judgment of Thoſe as fallacious, who deſert this Path of Nature and Experience; was thought to throw out ſtrong Hints againſt the Belief of all miraculous Interpoſitions; and was deſired to reconcile theſe Paſſages with his Acknowledgment of the Miracles of the Goſpel. Theſe Inſinuations ſeemed to reach farther than He might intend, and to affect all other Claims to ſupernatural Power as well as thoſe, which were advanced in the Primitive Church.

Dr. *M.* it ſeems thought this Objection worth his Notice, and it was natural to expect in his Defence ſome ſtrong and explicit Declarations of his *Chriſtian Faith*, and ſome Diſtinctions, by which a View of the Fabric of the World might be ſhewn to favour the *Miracles of the Goſpel* more than thoſe of the *Primitive Church*. Inſtead of which We are favoured with a new Subject, concerning the Perfection of the Law of Nature and Reaſon, which is falſe in one Senſe and foreign in the other; and which, inſtead of removing the former Inſinuations, is advanced directly in the ſame Manner, in which it was not long ſince urged by a profeſſed Enemy of all Revelation. This was not always Dr. *M*'s Strain; in his Life of *Cicero* (2d Edit. 8vo. Vol. 3. p. 354.) He ſpeaks of the Law of Nature--as written in the Hearts of the Gentiles, to Guide Them thro' that State of Ignorance and Darkneſs, of which They themſelves complained; *'till They ſhould be Bleſs'd with a more perfect Revelation of the Divine Will*: And again, p. 357. that the moſt exalted State of Human Reaſon is ſo far from ſuperſeding the Uſe, that it demonſtrates the Benefit *of a more explicit Revelation*;---and that *we muſt needs ſee abundant Reaſon to be Thankful to God for the Divine Light of his Goſpel*. How to reconcile all This with the Sentiments and Expreſſions

preſſions of his Vindication, it is now too late to aſk Dr. *M.* I ſhall therefore leave the Caſe, without farther Remark to the Judgment of his Advocates as well as of his Oppoſers.

Dr. *M.* comes now to the Defence of the *Free Inquiry*, in which the Firſt Head relates to the *Silence* of the Apoſtolical Fathers on the Subject of theſe Miraculous Powers. And here Archbiſhop *Wake*'s Opinion was mentioned as frivolous and ill-grounded, yet without any Attempt of diſproving the principal Evidence offered for it. Mr. *Toll* attempted to ſupply this Defect, and to Him Dr. *M.* now refers for Satisfaction herein, ſo that in this Point I need only refer to my Reply to Him.

Dr. *M.* ſays, that "the Reaſons why He "omitted to take Notice of this Paſſage, "were firſt the utter Inſignificancy, which it "appeared to have, as to any Proof or Evi-"dence, relating to this Queſtion; and, "ſecondly, a Regard alſo for the Character "of that worthy Prelate, which made Him "unwilling to recall into public Light a Pa-"raphraſe, which He took to be unworthy "of Him, *&c.*" (P. 13.) Perhaps the Review, which has been offered of that Paſſage, may ſhew that neither of theſe Reaſons need have prevailed with Dr. *M.* for the former Omiſſion of it, nor for neglecting to reinforce

force his Defender on this Point. Poſſibly the ſame favourable Intention towards the Archbiſhop's Character led Him likewiſe to qualify and alter his Words in the Account which He has given of his Opinion in this Matter. He repreſents the Archbiſhop as ſpeaking with *Diffidence* and *Uncertainty* with Regard to the miraculous Gifts of the Apoſtolick Fathers. He does indeed ſpeak with ſome Caution of their having the Gift of *Inſpiration*, and ſays, that *in all Probability they were endued with the extraordinary Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit in what They teach Us*, (C. x. §. 11.) This Dr. *M.* changed into *the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Spirit*, thus making the Archbiſhop ſpeak in general of *all* extraordinary Gifts, whereas He ſpoke only of one, *viz.* immediate Inſpiration. The Archbiſhop Himſelf expreſſly made this Diſtinction, and went on in the very next Section to ſhew, that therefore They *probably* had the Gift of Inſpiration, becauſe They *certainly* had other extraordinary Endowments; and again in the Beginning of the 18th Section ſays in theſe Words, "This will afford Us "juſt Cauſe to conclude that theſe Holy "Men were *doubtleſs* endued with a very "large Portion of the extraordinary Gifts of "the Holy Ghoſt," from whence He infers, that

that They had their Share alſo of the particular Gift which He was ſpeaking of.

Dr. *M.* did Him the Favour of ſome farther Miſrepreſentations. Beſides the groundleſs Charge of his neglecting to bring Teſtimonies from the Writers themſelves (which perhaps may be evaded by ſaying that thoſe Teſtimonies were not *expreſs*, but to be made out by *Inferences*; which however were diſtinct from ſuch as were drawn merely from external Circumſtances: Beſides this) when He is farther citing Him as arguing, that "the Apoſtolical Fathers were themſelves "alſo in ſome Meaſure inſpired too," He adds without any Authority from, and in expreſs Contradiction to his Author, *or endued with the extraordinary Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt:* And again, when the Archbiſhop allows, that the Gifts and Commiſſion of the Fathers were inferior to thoſe of the Apoſtles, Dr. *M.* repreſents Him as ſaying that they were *far inferior*, and that *both in their Kind and Degree*; which Words, tho' put in *Italicks*, as if they were the Archbiſhop's own, are no other than an Improvement of the Dr's. Theſe Alterations might be intended in Regard for the Character of that worthy Prelate; but I preſume, that All Perſons would chooſe rather to have Juſtice done them by a fair Citation of their Works, than

the

the Favour of ſuch Alterations as Others may happen to think more to their Credit.

My Father, whom Dr. *M.* calls a Writer of a more *ſanguine Complexion* than Archbiſhop *Wake*, (tho' the One had declared as peremptorily for the Continuance of miraculous Powers in the Church as the Other, and Both had referred to the Evidence next conteſted) had appealed to the Title or Addreſs of *Ignatius*'s Epiſtle to the Church of *Smyrna* as a plain Proof, that Miracles then continued. Dr. *M.* here again contents Himſelf with what He has already ſaid on this Point, and with referring again to Mr. *Toll*'s *Defence*; which, ſuch as it is, I have already conſidered. He goes on however to eſtabliſh his own Senſe of the Word *Chariſma*, which, He ſays, "as well in its Native and proper "Senſe, as in the Uſe, which has ever been "made of it both by the ſacred, and pri-"mitive Writers, ſignifies nothing more "than a Gift, whether it be natural or ſuper-"natural, ordinary or extraordinary." The direct Anſwer to this Obſervation is, that the former Part of it is true, but Nothing to the Purpoſe, and the latter Part of it is Nothing more than a Miſtake. The native and proper Senſe of the Word means a *Gift* in general, but this cannot prove, that it may not, or was not *reſtrained* and *appropriated* by Cuſtom

Cuſtom, to mean a particular Kind of Gift. The native and proper Senſe of the Word *Apoſtle* means, We know, no more than a *Meſſenger*, but will it therefore be ſaid, that it really means no more, and did not by Uſe contract a peculiar Senſe? It is aſſerted however in Fact, that "*Chariſma* in the "Uſe, which has ever been made of it "both by the Sacred and the Primitive Wri-"ters ſignifies nothing more than a Gift, "whether it be natural or ſupernatural, "ordinary or extraordinary." This is a Point, which can only be determined by an Examination of all the Paſſages wherein it occurs. And Firſt, as to the Sacred Writers, upon a Review of all the Texts, in which the Word is uſed, I think I may re-aſſert that it bears an appropriated Senſe, and is not uſed to ſignify a Gift in general, or a natural and ordinary Gift. There is only One or Two Paſſages, which can occaſion any Doubt, and they are not thoſe cited by Dr. *M.* on the Occaſion. Would He ſay that Eternal Life, or the Remiſſion of many Offences unto Juſtification, are natural and ordinary Gifts? The Term *Chariſma* is almoſt univerſally uſed to ſignify the Gift peculiarly given to Chriſtians thro' their Saviour, which, in whatever Senſe it is interpreted, is no Gift of *Nature*. If One Exception be thought

thought to be found, the Anſwer will be, that even that will be as rational, if underſtood as the Gift of *God our Saviour*, in Conformity to the Expreſſion as elſewhere uſed; or that if it be not, one ſingle Inſtance will not in this Caſe invalidate an appropriated Meaning, any more than in the other referred to: For the Word *Apoſtle* is found once or twice uſed in a Senſe different from that, to which it is confeſſed to be peculiarly applied. The whole Scheme of our Salvation is ſometimes repreſented as the *extraordinary Gift of God* under this Term in the *ſingular* Number; and the extraordinary Gifts which contributed as *Means* to promote this End, are always expreſſed by the ſame Term in the *plural* Number. Other Gifts not ſtrictly miraculous may poſſibly be included with thoſe, which are ſo, under the ſame Expreſſion. But the Point and Streſs of this Obſervation is, that This Term is not uſed to ſignify natural Gifts, or moral Virtues, or ordinary Grace *excluſive* of ſupernatural Endowments. Whereas it is uniformly and conſtantly uſed to ſignify *ſupernatural* Endowments in Contradiſtinction to natural Gifts throughout the firſt Epiſtle of St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, where He treats profeſſedly on this Subject. Here it cannot be ſaid that *doremata*, or any other general

Term,

Term, is uſed indifferently with this, to ſignify thoſe extraordinary Gifts; but when the Apoſtle confined Himſelf to thoſe Gifts, He confined Himſelf likewiſe to this particular Term. This was *appropriating* it as ſtrongly to this preciſe Meaning, as the Practice and Authority of an Apoſtle could do it; and this *Appropriation* was little leſs than neceſſary to guard againſt Errors, which might happen in the Uſe of a Word of a more doubtful Signification. If We find this Appropriation of this Term retained by ſucceeding Writers, We have then all the Evidence, which can well be expected upon ſuch an Article.

Dr. *M.* ſays, that the Primitive Writers ever made uſe of it to ſignify nothing more than a Gift, whether it be natural or ſupernatural, ordinary or extraordinary. Certainly it was a Taſk that properly lay on Him to prove this by the Induction of ſeveral Particulars, by referring to ſuch Paſſages in the Primitive Writers, where the Word was uſed unqueſtionably in this Senſe. But He contents Himſelf with referring to two Paſſages in St. *Clemens*, wherein, He ſays, He had before ſhewn that "He had ap-"plied the Word *Chariſmata*, or Gifts of "God, to denote the different Talents and "Abilities, natural and acquired, by which

"the

" the Characters of Men are uſually diſ-
" tinguiſhed." Now in the firſt of theſe Paſſages referred to, the Word *Chariſma* is not mentioned at all, and in the ſecond it is not mentioned in the *Plural* Number, ſo that neither of theſe Paſſages can poſſibly prove what He now aſſerts, that *Chariſmata* was uſed by St. *Clemens* to denote different Talents and Abilities natural and acquired. He goes on with ſo groſs a Miſrepreſentation of my Aſſertion on this Occaſion, as will exerciſe one's Charity to account for candidly. He ſays that I " declare that the
" very Gifts, or *Chariſmata* here recited, ſuch
" as Strength, Riches, Wiſdom, Humility,
" Continence, may ſtrictly be interpreted
" of ſupernatural Endowments." Whereas I ſaid expreſſly that the Senſe of thoſe Paſſages is full as rational and as ſtrong, if in both Places We interpret *them*, (that is, the Expreſſion of a *large Effuſion of the Holy Spirit*, and of *the Gift of God*, that called χάρισμα, which I had recited in the preceding Sentence, and which Dr. *M.* had attempted to invalidate) ſtrictly of ſupernatural Endowments. I conſidered theſe as *diſtinct* from the natural Gifts, and acquired Virtues afterwards mentioned, as I have ſhewn more at large in the Review of the laſt Paſſage, where *Chariſma* is the Term uſed, and

which

which alone therefore at preſent concerns the Queſtion. Of theſe I ſpoke ſo evidently that I know not how the Sentence could be miſtaken, or how ſo abſurd an Aſſertion could poſſibly be formed out of it, as Dr. *M.* has been pleaſed to repreſent as mine. I had rather ſtand convicted of many *Miſtakes* than of ſuch a palpable *Miſrepreſentation*.

If We go on to examine the Writers next ſucceeding the Apoſtles, this Term, wherever it occurs, bears plainly the Senſe of an extraordinary Gift. Dr. *M.* Himſelf has ſo tranſlated it in ſome Places, and his Neglect of pointing to other Paſſages, where it muſt be confined to common and ordinary Endowments, is a ſtrong preſumptive Proof, that no ſuch Paſſages were to be found. Indeed had They uſed the Term in a Senſe different from that which St. *Paul* uſed it in juſt before, without explaining that They intended it in another Senſe, This muſt have occaſioned great Confuſion amongſt Thoſe, who were accuſtomed to the Reading of that Apoſtle's Writings: Whereas when the Context ſhews, that They uſed the Word in the ſame Meaning, This is a ſtrong Proof, that *They* were convinced that the Apoſtle had ſo appropriated it. Nothing leſs than ſome plain and poſitive In-

ſtances, wherein the Term could mean Nothing but natural or acquired Gifts, would be ſufficient to weaken the Force of this Obſervation.

Some other Writers however have endeavoured to ſupply the Dr's Omiſſion in this Particular. The Author of the *two previous Queſtions* eſpecially obſerves, that "it "muſt not be inferred from ſuch an Ex"preſſion, that *every One*, who is ſaid to "receive χάρισμα, *a Gift*, received one of "the *miraculous* Sort." (P. 114.) He ſeems indeed to differ ſomewhat from Dr. *M.* for He allows that χάρισμα ſignifies an *extraordinary Endowment*, (P. 116.) which, I think, He explains to mean, in the loweſt Senſe, ſuch Acts of Faith and good Life as in *Kind* or *Degree* are peculiar to the Profeſſors of the Goſpel. The Authority here referred to, to ſhew the ambiguous and indiſcriminate Uſe of this Word, is that of the *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions*, which Thoſe, who have cited on this Occaſion, have ſufficiently ſhewn that They eſteem as a manifeſt Forgery. However, it is ſaid to be of good Authority in this Caſe, and I mean not to diſpute it; it being the Work of ſome early Writer or Writers, who may very well inform Us, in what Senſe this Term was uſed and underſtood in their Time. And this Teſtimony

timony is as full and decisive against Dr. *M's* Assertion, that "the Word *Charisma*, in the "Use made of it both by the Sacred and "Primitive Writers, signifies nothing more "than a Gift, whether it be natural or su-"pernatural, ordinary or extraordinary," as any that One would wish to produce. The Chapter referred to, treats professedly of those *Charismata* then spoken of by Christian Writers, and abounding amongst them. And first it appropriates the Meaning of them to such Gifts as were bestowed on the Members of the Church, by *Christ* the Head of it, and illustrates this Meaning by that Promise of such Powers as were unquestionably miraculous in every Instance. "Our "God and Saviour Jesus Christ spake thus to "Us, when we were All together, concern-"ing those *Charismata*, which were given "by Him thro' the Spirit: *These Signs shall* "*follow them that believe, in my Name shall* "*They cast out Devils*, &c." *—"which *Cha-*"*risma* were given first to Us the Apostles, "who were to preach the Gospel to every "Creature; and then of Necessity were "imparted to those, who were brought over

* φησὶ πᾶσιν ἅμα, περὶ τῶν ἐξ αὐτοῦ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δεδομένων χαρισμάτων· Σημεῖα δὲ τοῖς πιστεύσασιν, ταῦτα παρακολουθήσει· ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δαιμόνια ἐκβαλοῦσιν, &c.

" to the Faith by Us; not for any Advantage
" thereby to Thoſe, who wrought them,
" but for the Conviction of Unbelievers, that
" Thoſe, whom the Preaching of the Word
" could not influence, might be brought to
" Shame by the Power of thoſe Signs †."
—" It is not neceſſary therefore that every
" Believer ſhould caſt out Devils, or raiſe the
" Dead, or ſpeak with Tongues, but ſuch
" an One as ſhall be thought worthy of a
" *Chariſma* for any uſeful Cauſe, for the
" Salvation of a Believer ‡."—" We ſay theſe
" Things, that thoſe, who have received
" theſe *Chariſmata*, ſhould not be lifted up
" againſt thoſe who have not received them;
" for We ſpeak of ſuch *Chariſmata* as relate
" to miraculous Powers; for there is no One
" who has believed in God thro' Chriſt, but
" what has receiv'd a ſpiritual *Chariſma* ‖."

† Τυτων των χαρισμάτων πρότερον μὲν ἡμῖν δοθέντων τοῖς ἀπιστοῦσι μέλλουσι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγέλλειν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει· ἔπειτα δὲ τοῖς δι' ἡμῶν πιστεύσασιν ἀναγκαίως χορηγουμένων· οὐκ εἰς τὴν τῶν ἐνεργούντων ὠφέλειαν, ἀλλ' εἰς τὴν ἀπίστων συγκατάθεσιν, ἵνα ἃς οὐκ ἔπεισεν ὁ λόγος, τούτους ἢ τῶν σημείων δυσωπήσῃ δύναμις.

‡ οὐκ ἐπάναγκες ἦν πάντα πιστὸν δαίμονας ἐκβάλλειν, ἢ νεκροὺς ἀναστᾶν, ἢ γλώσσαις λαλεῖν; ἀλλὰ τὸν ἀξιωθέντα χαρίσματος ἐπί τινι αἰτίᾳ χρησίμῃ εἰς σωτηρίαν τῶν ἀπίστων.

‖ Ταῦτα δὲ φαμεν, ἐπὶ τὸ μὴ ἐπαίρεσθαι τοὺς λαβόντας χαρίσματα τοιάδε, κατὰ τῶν μὴ λαβόντων, χαρίσματα δὲ λέγομεν, τὰ διὰ τῶν σημείων, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄνθρωπος πιστεύσας διὰ Χριστοῦ εἰς τὸν θεὸν, ὃς οὐκ εἴληφε χάρισμα πνευματικόν.

This

This Diſtinction is appeal'd to, to ſhew that the Word was not appropriated to mean a *ſupernatural* Endowment; whereas it appears to me to prove that it was ſo appropriated, and would be ſo underſtood, if ſome particular and expreſs Caution was not thrown in to ſhew where it might ſignify otherwiſe. Thoſe, who have aſſerted that *Chariſmata* was uſed to ſignify miraculous Powers, never ſaid that it could not ſignify any thing leſs, according to the original and native Senſe of the Word; but that it was ſo fixed by the cuſtomary Uſe of it amongſt the earlieſt Writers in the Chriſtian Church as obviouſly to bear that Meaning. This very Chapter confirms this Obſervation, for in a profeſſed Diſcourſe on the Subject it uſes the ſame Word in the ſame Senſe, and ſpeaks of the miraculous Endowments of the Preachers of Chriſtianity under this very Title. When it goes on to uſe it of a different Sort of Gifts, to prevent Miſtakes, it expreſſly diſtinguiſhes that it does do ſo, and obſerves that in ſome Senſe every Believer had received a ſpiritual Gift. It is uſed without any Epithet or Mark of Diſtinction in the preceding Part of the Chapter, where it bore its known and accuſtomed Signification, of a miraculous Endowment; and when it is applied in a leſs proper and leſs uſual Acceptation, there it is particularly

noted, and the Meaning of it is aſcertained in expreſs Terms. And what then can be drawn from this Paſſage, but what may very readily be admitted, and may indeed be applied to eſtabliſh the forementioned Senſe of the Term? It is allowed that it may admit of the Signification of a Gift not ſtrictly miraculous, and that when an Author declares that He intends it in ſuch a Senſe, it ſhould be accepted according to his own Explanation of it; and from hence it ſeems natural to infer, that where no ſuch Explanation is uſed, it ſhould be taken in its accuſtomed Signification. As Exceptions do not *invalidate* a General Rule, but *confirm* it where no Exception occurs, ſo the Neceſſity, which the Compilers of this Chapter found Themſelves under of explaining themſelves, when they uſed the Term *Chariſma* of Endowments not miraculous, does the more ſtrongly ſhew the known and received Meaning of that Word.—

It ought farther to be obſerved againſt Dr. *M.* that even here, when it is diſtinguiſhed not to mean neceſſarily miraculous Gifts, yet it is not uſed of common Gifts natural or acquired, but reſtrained to ſuch as are peculiar to Chriſtians as ſuch. "The Gifts, the *Cha-*
"*riſmata* of God which are given by Him
"thro' Chriſt, are different;" ſays an enſuing

Paſſage

Paſſage in the ſame Chapter §: And then follows an Enumeration of ſeveral of them, which are concluded with ſuch an eminent Degree of practical Virtues as is peculiar to the Diſciples of Chriſt. At the loweſt therefore it means an *extraordinary Endowment*, as the Author of the *previous Queſtions* acknowledges; but his Inference from hence does not appear ſo certain. "If, ſays He, any "Ancient Writer ſpeaks of the *Gifts* of "God, (*i. e.* of theſe *Chariſmata*,) with "which good Men were particularly endowed, it does not follow that ſuch Men "had a Power of *working Miracles*, unleſs it "be expreſſly ſaid, that the Gifts They had "were of the *miraculous* Kind." I think on the contrary, that this "will follow, unleſs "it is expreſſly ſaid that they were *not* of "the miraculous Kind:" The Reaſon is, that tho' other Attainments were ſometimes included together with ſupernatural Gifts under the general Title of *Chariſmata*, yet they are never ſo called in Contradiſtinction to miraculous Powers, as theſe often are in Contradiſtinction to all other Gifts: And therefore when Any One is ſaid to be endowed with theſe *Chariſmata*, it is implied that He has

§ Διαφορα γαρ εισι τε θεε χαρισματα παρ' αυτε δια χριστε δεδομενα.

miraculous Gifts as well as others, unleſs it is explained to the contrary.

But there is a more deciſive Argument ſtill behind. As the Care taken in the forementioned Chapter to diſtinguiſh miraculous Endowments from others in the Chriſtian Church (which are all repreſented as *extraordinary* in Compariſon of the Knowlege and Practice of the Heathen World) ſhews that ſuch Care was neceſſary; and the very Manner of ſpeaking proves that *Chariſmata* would of Courſe be underſtood of ſupernatural Gifts, and would properly be ſo underſtood, being primarily ſo applied by the Writers of theſe Conſtitutions themſelves; ſo if any expreſs Evidence can be produced from any of the Primitive Writers, that this Term was ſo uſed and underſtood amongſt them, this might well be hoped ſatisfactorily to determine this Queſtion. Now St. *Chryſoſtom*, (as Mr. *Brooke* has obſerved before me, P. 82.) in his Comment upon that Chapter in St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, where the various χαρίσματα of the Holy Ghoſt are ſpecified, uſes the Word χάρισμα, as if it had been in a manner appropriated by St. *Paul*, and the Eccleſiaſtical Writers, to that Signification. Tom. X. Hom. 29. in Epiſt. 1. ad Cor.

The next Paſſage, referred to by my Father, Dr. *M.* did not chooſe to leave to the

Force

Force of what his Defender has ſaid on it, but has taken it again under his own Conſideration. And firſt He thought fit to amend his State of the Caſe, which indeed much needed it; to which He ought to have added an Acknowledgment, that He had miſrepreſented it before. For after citing a Paſſage from *Ignatius*, in which that Saint deſires the Chriſtians at *Rome* not to uſe any Means to prevent his Martyrdom, He then tells us, that from theſe Words this learned Perſon (ſpeaking of my Father) infers, *that the Prayers of the Primitive Chriſtians had the Power to diſable the Wild Beaſts from aſſaulting the Martyrs, who were expoſed to them in the Amphitheatres.* But if we look into the Diſſertation referred to, We ſhall find that my Father does not cite one Word of this Paſſage referred to by Dr. *M.* but another Paſſage, which is very plain and full to his Purpoſe. His Words are—Et vero ex Epiſtolâ ad Romanos intelligimus Martyribus nonnullis datum ne poſſent in illos Beſtiæ immiſſæ ſævire. Proinde illud à Romanis obnixiſſimis precibus contendit, ne eorum orationibus id in ſuâ Cauſâ contingeret. Sunt enim illa Divini Martyris verba mellitiſſima: Ὀναίμην τῶν θηρίων τῶν ἑτοιμασμένων, ἃ καὶ εὔχομαι σύντομά μοι εὑρεθῆναι· ἃ καὶ κολακεύσω συντόμως με καταφαγεῖν (οὐχ ὡΣΠΕΡ ΤΙΝΩΝ ΔΕΙ-

ΔΕΙΛΑΙΝΟΜΕΝΑ ΟΥΚ ΗΝ ΑΝΤΟ

κἂν ἀυτὰ δὲ ἀκοντα μὴ θέλη ἐγὼ προσδιαορίσαι. Diſſ. Iren. II. § 30. Nothing can be more evident than that it is from this laſt cited Paſſage that my Father argues, (Sunt enim illa, &c.) and the Inference that He draws is no more than what is plainly contained in them, *viz.* that the Wild Beaſts were ſometimes miraculouſly reſtrained from touching the Chriſtians, who were expoſed to them. That his Meaning might not be miſtaken, He has printed the Words ΩΣΠΕΡ, &c. in Capitals. But tho' theſe Capitals ſtared Dr. *M.* in the Face, He thought fit to ſtop ſhort and paſs them by, tho' He quotes the Words immediately preceding; and then adds that the Paſſage itſelf has not the leaſt Reference to any thing miraculous.—This was the Gentleman, who aſſured Us, that We ſhould in his Performance "find none of the Arts commonly em-"ployed by Diſputants, either to perplex a "good Cauſe, or to palliate a bad one." I hope indeed the Arts of ſuch foul Miſrepreſentation are not commonly employed by Diſputants, whatever other Faults They are liable to fall into, when the Saw of Controverſy grows warm in their Hands, as Mr. *Norris* ingeniouſly expreſſes it. If Dr. *M.* thought that the Conſequence did not follow

from

from the Paſſage referred to, it was his Buſineſs to ſhew that it did not; but it was not common Juſtice to omit the Reference ſo particularly diſtinguiſhed, and to repreſent my Father as arguing only from another Paſſage, which alone was not ſo full to his Point.

Dr. *M.* ſeems to have been conſcious of this Omiſſion, for in his *Vindication* He has referred to this particular Paſſage, tho' He has not been ſo juſt as to obſerve, that it was the very Paſſage referred to by my Father, and on which He principally built the foremention'd Aſſertion. Dr. *M.* now argues, that if my Father's Interpretation of St. *Ignatius*'s Requeſt had been the true Meaning of it, "it would imply that the Efficacy of ſuch "Prayers had been tried in other Caſes of "Martyrdom, prior to that of *Ignatius*: Yet "no ſuch Fact," He ſays, "is to be found "in all Hiſtory, nor any Mention made of "it by the Apoſtles or Apoſtolic Writers, "except by a ſingle Intimation in this very "Epiſtle, where *Ignatius* ſays, that He would "*encourage the Wild Beaſts, that they might be* "*ſure to devour Him, and not ſerve Him, as* "*They had done ſome, whom out of Fear, They* "*had not touched.*" (P. 20.) Now This, which He is pleaſed to call an *Intimation*, is a very clear and expreſs Teſtimony of the Fact

which

which is here called for; and it is the more decisive to the Purpose to which it is applied, for being found *in this very Epistle*, than if it had occurred elsewhere. Had such an Account been mentioned in any other Author, of some Christians who had been thus miraculously preserved when thrown to the Wild Beasts, by those Beasts appearing afraid to touch them, it might have been said that it was not certain, that *Ignatius* referred to that Case, for that if He had, it might have been expected that He would have plainly mentioned it: Whereas now that He has expressly specified it, it is hard indeed, that We will not allow the Martyr to know his own Meaning and to explain Himself. He appears throughout the whole Epistle apprehensive that Those, to whom He wrote, might prevent his Martyrdom, and in this Place He very explicitly shews the Grounds of his Apprehensions, and the Manner in which He thought his Deliverance might be effected by a supernatural Restraint thrown on the Wild Beasts which should devour Him, as had happened, He says, in the Case of some former Christians. The Event, which He feared, was plainly somewhat distinct from any Favour which could arise from *Intercession* to Prince or People, and such as was not to be effected by any natural Means whatsoever.

He

He does not ſay that He was afraid that the Wild Beaſts ſhould not be let looſe upon Him, but his Concern was, leſt They ſhould not aſſault Him, as They had refuſed to do ſome other Chriſtian Brethren. His Words are emphatical, and exclude the only imaginable Suggeſtion of making Intereſt with the Keepers to feed and fill them, that They might not be tempted by Hunger to devour Him. For beſides that this Scheme was impracticable, as being certainly penal to Thoſe who had dared to attempt it; beſides that Wild Beaſts will tear and kill when they do not devour, the very Words uſed ſhew that this was not the Caſe; for He does not ſay barely that the Beaſts did not touch them, but that they viſibly expreſſed an *Awe* at the Preſence of the Confeſſors, and were *afraid* to touch them. Now how was this to be brought about, and by what Means did He think that the Brethren could thus ſtop the Mouths of Lions in his Behalf, but by the Efficacy of their *Prayers?* Let Us compare a few of his own Expreſſions on the Occaſion. At the Beginning of the Epiſtle He ſays, *But I fear your Love, leſt it do me an Injury. For it is eaſy for You to do what You pleaſe.* φοβοῦμαι γὰρ τὴν ὑμῶν ἀγάπην, μὴ αὐτή με ἀδικήσῃ· ὑμῖν γὰρ εὐχερές ἐστιν ὃ θέλετε ποιῆσαι. This could not poſſibly be true, unleſs He

meant

meant it of their Intereſt in the Court of Heaven by their united Supplications. They could not eaſily do what They pleaſed either with the Populace or the Magiſtracy, nor has Dr. *M.* attempted to reconcile his Suppoſition in this Place with the contemptible Account of the Chriſtians in the firſt Ages, which He has elſewhere given Us. *Ignatius* in another Part ſhews farther, that He ſpoke not of any Application to the Emperor or to the People, but of the Power which They might have over the Wild Beaſts themſelves, *I beſeech You that You ſhew not an unſeaſonable Good Will towards me; ſuffer me to be Food to the Wild Beaſts.* Παραχαλῶ ὑμᾶς, μὴ ἔυνοια ἄκαιρος γένησθέ μοι· Ἄφετέ με θηρίων ἶναι βορὰν, and again, *Rather encourage the Beaſts, that They may become my Sepulchre.* Μᾶλλον κολακεύσατε τὰ θηρία, ἵνα μοι τάφος γένωνται. This Antitheſis ſeems to imply (eſpecially when conſidered together with that Paſſage following in the Epiſtle, which ſpeaks expreſſly of the Wild Beaſts having been reſtrained in ſome Inſtances) that They might hope to prevent his Death, not by making Intereſt for Him with the Powers *above* or *below*, but by a Method, which had already proved ſucceſsful in ſome Inſtances, by praying to God to over-rule and reſtrain the Fury of thoſe Wild Beaſts to which He was to be expoſed.

Ignatius

Ignatius intreats them on the contrary rather to encourage thoſe Devourers, that He might fall by them, than to endeavour by any Means to ſtill their Rage. If We allow Him therefore to be his own Interpreter, it is plain that He never thought of the *Chriſtian Brethren at Rome offering or uſing their Intereſt to preſerve Him from that cruel Death which He was then going to ſuffer*, which is Dr. *M*'s Interpretation of it. Had This been his Apprehenſion, He would have expreſſed Himſelf much otherwiſe, and would have taken ſome Notice of their Application to the Rulers to ſave Him. In diſſwading them from it, ſome Phraſe or Intimation muſt have occurred concerning ſuch Kind of *Interceſſion*. He would not have confined all his Diſcourſe to their Influence over the *Beaſts*, and to their Applications to Heaven by *Prayer* (as I have before ſhewn that He has done) if He had only feared their Intereſt amongſt their Fellow-Creatures.

Upon the Whole, My Father inferred Nothing from the Writings of *Ignatius*, but what the Words produced from Him do plainly expreſs or imply, and what the Review of the whole Epiſtle does more ſtrongly confirm.

Dr. *M*'s next Objection is, that "the Martyr acquaints the *Romans*, that He had

written

" written to the other Churches, and ſigni-
" fied to them all, that He was willing to
" die for God, unleſs They, the *Romans*,
" ſhould hinder Him:" From whence He infers, that the Hindrance which He ſo much dreaded, was not to ariſe from Prayers, but from " ſome other Means, which were pe-
" culiarly practicable to the Chriſtians of
" *Rome*, and of no other Church whatſoever." But this likewiſe is founded on ſome Degree of Miſrepreſentation. *Ignatius* did not write to all the other Churches, that He was fearful of being deprived of the Honour of Martyrdom by Means of the Chriſtian Brethren at *Rome*, for We find no ſuch Fear expreſſed in his Epiſtles to Any of them. But *He wrote and ſignified to them all, that He was willing to die for God*; and when He comes to mention this to the *Romans*, He inſerts this Clauſe, *unleſs You hinder me.* He expreſſes to them his Apprehenſions ariſing from them, which He had omitted in his Letters to other Churches. But ſays Dr. *M.*
" If this Hindrance was to be effected by
" their Prayers, ſurely the Prayers of every
" other Church muſt have been as effectual,
" and as much to be apprehended by *Igna-*
" *tius* as thoſe of the *Romans*:" That they might have been as effectual, if the Members of each Church were equally pure and holy,

holy, We need not diſpute; but that they were as much to be apprehended by *Ignatius*, there is no certain or probable Reaſon to conclude. As *Rome* was appointed to be the Scene of his Execution, it was moſt likely that the Chriſtians of that Place would be moſt deeply affected with it, and be moſt ſollicitous, if poſſible, to prevent it. They who were to be the ſorrowful Eye-Witneſſes of his Martyrdom, if it took Effect, might for that very Reaſon be more deſirous than Others, to avoid the Spectacle, and to preſerve his uſeful Life. The Enjoyment of his Preſence longer amongſt them, and the Advantage which They might hope to reap from ſo eminent a miraculous Interpoſition openly wrought amongſt themſelves in a Place of ſuch Eminence and Concourſe, might be farther Inducements to them to deſire and to attempt his Preſervation by ſupernatural Means. Theſe were Conſiderations, in which the *Epheſians*, the *Magneſians*, the *Trallians*, the *Philadelphians*, the *Smyrnæans*, and all *abſent* Churches were not concerned, and therefore *Ignatius* had not the ſame Reaſon to apprehend this Method of interpoſing from them as He had from the *Romans*. He might perhaps from the Probability of the Caſe foreſee, that theſe laſt would thus apply themſelves to ſollicit Heaven for

his Preſervation; or He might know from ſure Intelligence that They were preparing Themſelves for this Service, and that *Prayers were already made without ceaſing of that Church unto God for Him*, which He deſires them rather to convert into Petitions for his Conſtancy and Perſeverance under his Trial. On either Suppoſition the Manner of his Writing to them was Pious and Proper, and the Reaſon is very clear, why He mentions this Circumſtance to them, and to them only. He would not diſſwade other Churches from that, which He had no particular Reaſon to ſuppoſe that they would think of, (which might have been interpreted into a Hint of the Practice) but where He either ſtrongly preſumed, or was actually aſſured, that They would ſupernaturally attempt what could not be hoped for from any Human Means, there He earneſtly cautions them againſt it, and entreats them to forward and not to hinder his much-wiſhed for Martyrdom. The Diſtinction is very obvious, and the Grounds of it were peculiar to the Place where He ſuffered, not becauſe there only Any Intereſt could effectually be made (for no ſuch Intereſt could any where be made) but becauſe there, where He was ſoon to be preſent, his Life would be thought moſt deſirable, and his Death moſt afflicting, and

of

of Courſe all poſſible Endeavours would be moſt likely to be uſed in his Behalf. It is farther to be added, that as He opens the *Cauſe* of his Apprehenſions, in the Examples which had happened of this Kind before, and as He mentions this only in his Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and in a Manner which ſeems to imply that they well knew them before, it is moſt probable, that theſe triumphant Inſtances had befallen ſome eminent Chriſtians at *Rome*; and this might be another Reaſon, why He who was ſo zealous of the Honour of Martyrdom, might be particularly fearful of failing of it in the ſame Place.

The Whole of this Method of Reaſoning is much confirmed by a Review of the *Epiſtles* of St. *Ignatius*, and of the *Account* of his *Martyrdom*. He did not doubt the equal Efficacy of the Prayers of other Churches, and therefore He expreſſly ſollicits them in his own Behalf; that He might ſpeedily attain the Honour He ſo ardently deſired: But not being apprehenſive of any extraordinary Interpoſition from them for his Preſervation, He ſuppreſſes any Intimation of it, and aſks their Prayers in a more general Manner. In the *Martyrdom* of *Ignatius* We read that the Churches of *Aſia* honoured this Holy Man by the Attendance of their Biſhops, Prieſts and Deacons at *Smyrna*; and that He *en-*

treated them all, but more particularly Polycarp, *to contend with God in his Behalf, that being ſuddenly taken by the Beaſts from the World, He might appear before the Face of Chriſt.* (Martyr. Ign. § 9.) In his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians* He ſays, *for Chriſt I bear about theſe Bonds, thoſe ſpiritual Jewels, in which I would to God that through your Prayers I might ariſe: Of which I intreat You to make me always Partaker, that I may be found in the Lot of the Chriſtians of* Epheſus, and § 11. In his Epiſtle to the *Magneſians* He ſays, *Be mindful of me in your Prayers, that I may attain unto God---For I ſtand in Need of your Joint-Prayers in God,* &c. § 14. and again to the *Trallians---Pray alſo for me; who thro' the Mercy of God ſtand in Need of your Prayers, that I may be worthy of the Portion, which I am about to obtain, that I be not found a Reprobate.* § 12. Theſe Paſſages ſhew plainly that He did not undervalue the Prayers of other Churches, or think that there was a peculiar ſuperior Efficacy in thoſe of the *Romans*; but that his particular Application to them not to prevent his Martyrdom by their Prayers, proceeded from ſome ſuch juſt Grounds of Apprehenſion, as thoſe foremen-tioned, particularly relative to them.

I had obſerved farther on this Head, that *Ignatius* having been ſentenced to Death by

the Emperor Himſelf, who was at this Time far abſent from *Rome*, there was no Authority left ſufficient to reverſe the Imperial Decree; and that therefore *Ignatius*'s Requeſt could not refer to their making Intereſt for Him, but to the Uſe of ſome ſupernatural Means in his Behalf. This Dr. *M.* cenſures as "trifling and declamatory, grounded on "looſe Conjecture and an imperfect Know-"lege of the Hiſtory of thoſe Times," as He propoſes to ſhew. Should We not then expect that He ſhould have ſhewn, that there were ſome Limitations on the Emperor's Power in this Caſe; that there was ſome farther Reſerve in favour of condemned Criminals; or that there was ſome Example of a Sentence being reverſed, which yet had been paſſed by the Emperor in Perſon? But Nothing of this Kind is proved, or offered to be proved. We are amuſed with the Account of the *Gladiators*, where the People had a Right, by Preſcription, to ſave the Life of the conquered Party, which every One knows to be true, and equally ſees to be Nothing to the preſent Purpoſe: But Dr. *M.* ſays, "the Caſe was the ſame with Re-"gard to Perſons condemned to be thrown "to the Beaſts, where, if the Mob had ta-"ken a Fancy to reſerve the Life of Any "One in the ſame Manner, They would

" certainly have been gratified in it." This is a bare unſupported Aſſertion, grounded on looſe Conjecture, and, I will not ſay, an *imperfect Knowlege* of the Hiſtory of thoſe Times, but an *imperfect Repreſentation* of it. The diſtinguiſhing Circumſtance referred to is left entirely out of the Queſtion, and not a Syllable is ſaid to the Caſe of this Martyr's having receiv'd his Sentence from an uncontroulable Authority. Even the Aſſertion itſelf as expreſſed by Dr. *M.* ſhews his Conſciouſneſs that this Caſe of condemned *Criminals* was not parallel to that of the *Gladiators*. He does not ſay, as in the former Inſtance, that " if a Clamor was raiſed in Fa-" vour of the Life of the Perſon, who was " about to ſuffer, it was always granted to " the Demand of the Aſſembly;" but only, that " if the Mob had taken a Fancy to re-" ſerve the Life of any One, (that was " thrown to the Beaſts) in the ſame Man-" ner, They would certainly have been gra-" tified in it." Now Every Circumſtance, in which theſe Caſes differed, ſhews the Uncertainty and the Improbability of what is here aſſerted.

In the firſt Place the Peformance of the Gladiators was a voluntary Exerciſe, undertaken for Hire for the Entertainment of the People, wherein They knew on what Terms

They

They engaged, and that They were to ſtand to the Courteſy of the People for their Lives, in Caſe They were vanquiſhed. This prevailed with them to exert themſelves vigorouſly, to give Diverſion to the People by their Skill and Courage, that at the worſt Event They might have *their Favour* for their Security. And as to the *Slaves*, which were ſold to this Service, which was chiefly when theſe Entertainments firſt commenced, They had this Circumſtance of their Servitude to recommend them farther to Compaſſion, if They behaved well, and had pleaſed the Spectators by their Peformances. Whereas *Criminals*, as ſuch, were juſtly obnoxious to the People, and could have no Reaſon to expect to raiſe the Pity of the Multitude, and incline them to prevent their Sufferings, when They were no other than the juſt Reward of their Deeds. The Gladiators were innocent, except with Reſpect to their Profeſſion, and in that They placed ſome Merit as calculated for the Diverſion of the Public; ſo that They had no Reaſon to fear the Reſentment of an injured Multitude, unleſs They offended them by a Cowardice or Ignorance unſuitable to their Order and Profeſſion. Whereas *Capital Offenders* were of Courſe to be conſidered as Enemies to the Public, and if ſuch a Privilege had

been reſerved to the People, and had been as often practiſed as in the other Caſe, it would have been inconſiſtent with the Execution of Publick Juſtice.

Again, Thoſe who in this Method ſuffered the Penalty of their ſuppoſed Crimes, had not the ſame Means of recommending themſelves to the Favour of the People. In the Combats between Man and Man, the dextrous and reſolute Uſe of their ſeveral Arms was what yielded the Satisfaction, and ingratiated them with the Spectators. Whereas the *Criminals*, who were exhibited only to be torn to Pieces and devoured by the Wild Beaſts, were not always furniſhed with Arms for their own Defence; and if They had, yet unleſs They had been trained to the Exerciſe of them, (which muſt be quite accidental) They could give no Diverſion by their Feats of Skill, on which alone the Hopes of the vanquiſhed Gladiator was founded. There were indeed Gladiators, who prepared for this Exerciſe, and undertook to combat with Wild Beaſts; but theſe are not the Perſons that Dr. *M.* ſpeaks of, but ſuch as were *condemned* to be thrown to the Beaſts: Nor could the ſame Favour, for a peculiar Reaſon, be ſhewn to vanquiſhed Gladiators of this Sort, as to Thoſe who combated with their own Species. The Conqueror in that Caſe

ſtood

ſtood attentive to the Signal of the People for the Preſervation or Deſtruction of his Foe; whereas This was not to be expected of Beaſts kept wild for the very Purpoſe, and enraged by Aſſaults, but He, who failed of Victory, muſt of Courſe expect to periſh in the Attempt.

Again, This Method of throwing ſuppoſed Criminals to the Wild Beaſts, was then a new or a very unuſual Sort of Puniſhment. We have no Account of it before it was applied by Perſecutors to Chriſtians, for whoſe Deſtruction it ſeems by malicious Cruelty to have been deviſed. It was never uſed to Any but Thoſe who were ſuppoſed to be the Worſt of Men, in whoſe Favour the Interceſſion of the People could not be expected, and in this very Light it was applied for the Martyrdom of Many of the Profeſſors of the Goſpel. Dr. *M.* Himſelf allows that the Perſecutions of the Church were frequently brought on and forced as it were upon the Government by the Rage and Clamors of the Populace, and therefore as this Puniſhment was then as it were appropriated to the Name and Title of *Chriſtians*, it cannot well be ſuppoſed that there had been a ſingle Inſtance, in which the Mob had taken a Fancy, as Dr. *M.* expreſſes it, to preſerve the Life of any Perſon ſo condemned, or from whence it can

be

be inferred that They would certainly have been gratified in it, if They had desired it.

The Reason, which Dr. *M.* has assigned, why the People might be moved to Compassion in this particular Case, is founded on a Misrepresentation of the Nature of the Sentence passed on *Ignatius*, and an entire Omission of the Authority of it, which was the very Point which had here been urged against Him. When He represents the People as capable of being moved by the Sight of "an "infirm Old Man, incapable of giving them "any Diversion by any Sort of Resistance to "the Beasts," (P. 24.) He seems to have forgot, that this was the very Sight which the People expected. They did not look for Him in a *Gladiatorial* Capacity, or imagine that the Ancient Prelate was to enter the Lists with Arms of Self-Defence. His Sentence was not to combat with the Wild Beasts, which would have been ridiculous in itself; but to be thrown to them to be destroyed; and the *Delight of the Roman People*, which as the Dr. observes, the Emperor proposed in it, was not in the Sight of so unsuitable a Battle, but in the Destruction of so eminent a Patron of the Christian Cause. This would be sure to gratify the Populace in their Rage and Malice against this Cause, before represented; and This apparently was the Reason,

why

why He ſent the Martyr ſo far to his Execution.

But there is not a Word ſaid, by Way of Argument, to the main Point of the Impoſſibility of an inferior Magiſtrate's reverſing the Sentence of the *Emperor* Himſelf in a Capital Caſe. The Aſſertion indeed is repeated, that "the preſiding Magiſtrate from the Nature "of his Office was intruſted always of Courſe "with a diſcretionary Power of gratifying "the People in any Demand of that Sort, "that is, when they petitioned for the Life "of any Perſon." This, however true in the Caſe of *Gladiators*, is more than has yet been proved, where the *Puniſhment of the Criminals*, for Capital Offences, was intended in theſe Spectacles, as well as the Entertainment of the Publick. And if This was proved likewiſe, the Difficulty would yet remain in its full Force in the preſent Caſe, where the Emperor in Perſon had ſat in Judgment, had paſſed a definitive Sentence, and tranſmitted it to ſubordinate Officers at a Diſtance to be put in Execution. The Supreme Authority of the Emperors in judicial Caſes, as well as Others, is ſo clearly eſtabliſhed in the Hiſtory of them All, and *Ignatius*'s Caſe was ſo ſingular, in having been heard and condemned by *Trajan* Himſelf, that He could have no Thought of being ſaved by Intereſt

Intereſt made afterwards to inferior Magiſtrates at *Rome*: Nor could Any Thing make this Suppoſition probable or poſſible, but ſome Clauſe in ſome Conſtitution relating to it, or ſome expreſs Example to the Point in Hand; neither of which Dr. *M.* thought fit to produce. It may farther be obſerved, that *Trajan* appears by this Relation to have been at this Time highly incenſed againſt the Chriſtians, and particularly againſt *Ignatius* for his bold Confeſſion, on which Account the Reverſal of that Sentence would have been more dangerous, and therefore leſs probable. I have been the longer on this Head, becauſe Dr. *M.* has treated it with peculiar Scorn, and a moſt groundleſs Triumph; whereas the ſtricteſt Review of every Circumſtance will, I believe, confirm the Point at firſt inferred from hence, that *Ignatius* in the Paſſage ſpoken of had certainly a View to a miraculous Deliverance.

On the Subject of Viſions and Revelations Dr. *M.* has been forced to alter the State of the Queſtion, and to do, as He has charged his Oppoſers with doing, *change Hands* on the Occaſion. At firſt his Attempt was to ſhew that no miraculous Powers were continued to the Church after the Days of the Apoſtles, and He Himſelf reckoned *Prophetic Viſions* as One of thoſe miraculous Gifts, which

which He attempted to diſprove. But being aware what Evidence would be offered againſt Him on this Head, He ſeemed in one Place to give up this Point, by ſaying, that "if it "ſhould appear probable to Any, that They "were favoured on ſome Occaſions with ex-"traordinary Illuminations, Viſions, or Divine "Impreſſions, yet the Gifts of this Sort were "merely perſonal, granted for their particular "Comfort, and reaching no farther than "themſelves." The contrary of this was ſhewn, and no Sort of Anſwer is offered to it. "If, ſaid I, the Hiſtory of the Predic-"tions of St. *Ignatius* and St. *Polycarp* be "*real*," (as Dr. *M*'s Diſtinction calculated to evade them, ſeemed to allow) "then they "might be both a *Support* to *them*, and an "Evidence to Others of the Truth of what "They taught; for Nothing can be a ſtronger "Proof of Divine Aſſiſtance than a Spirit "of Prophecy." A Gentleman, who ſeems ſufficiently diſpoſed to favour Dr. *M*'s Argument, has laid great Streſs upon this Point, and ſeems to think Nothing can render Miracles credible at all, but the Conjunction of prophetical Gifts with them. In this Light there is ſtill a more immediate Connection betwixt this Endowment and the Others, and if it be ſhewn that They had Divine Aſſiſtance in this Inſtance, it will be more eaſily preſumed

and

and more readily credited that They had the ſame ſupernatural Support in other Inſtances. Here therefore Dr. *M.* appears to be in ſome Diſtreſs, whether He ſhould give up his firſt Deſign, or his laſt-mentioned Conceſſion, and endeavours ſtill to reconcile them, which was beyond his Power. "Whether, ſays "He, the Predictions ſpoken of be real or "not, it is certain that they are nothing to "the Purpoſe of our preſent Controverſy, as "not being the Effect of any ſtanding Power "granted to the Church for the Converſion "of Heathens." (P. 26.) Well then, the State of the Controverſy is now quite altered; and He ſhould I think have altered his Title-Page too. He ſhould have told Us there, as well as in the Middle of this his Vindication, that "whether God has wrought any "Miracles or not ſince the Days of the A-"poſtles, is an Inquiry, which He does not "at all enter into; and that the ſingle Point "which He maintains, is, that the Church "had no ſtanding Power of working any." (P. 33.) This however certainly was not the Propoſal which at firſt He offered to the World. That profeſſedly was to ſhew, that "We have no ſufficient Reaſon to believe "upon the Authority of the Primitive Fa-"thers, that any ſuch (miraculous) Powers "were continued to the Church after the

"Days

"Days of the Apoſtles." He was ſuppoſed to mean what He ſaid, and was therefore underſtood to be arguing againſt all miraculous Interpoſitions. His Management of the Argument confirmed this Notion of it, for He particularly allowed *prophetical Gifts* to be a Species of miraculous Gifts, and argued againſt them as ſuch: Whereas now it ſeems they may be given up as nothing to the Purpoſe of the preſent Controverſy, as not being, He ſays, the Effect of any ſtanding Power granted to the Church for the Converſion of Heathens.

But why was not ſome Proof added likewiſe for this Opinion? Why may not *Prophetical* Gifts as well as any Others be conſidered as the Effect of a ſtanding Power granted to the Church for "the Converſion "of the Heathens?" Some, We ſee, think them more convincing than any other Species of miraculous Gifts, at leaſt they muſt be allowed to be moſt convincing in Conjunction. For having explained the *Hypothetical* Manner of putting this Argument, I will uſe it again. If St. *Polycarp*'s Prediction of his own Death was *real*, muſt not the Fore-Knowlege of it by Thoſe to whom He communicated it, and their View of the ſpeedy Completion of it, be a very ſatisfactory Proof to them of his Pretenſions, and of a ſupernatural

tural Aſſiſtance attending Him? Can this Gift be ſaid to have been merely Perſonal, granted only for his particular Comfort, and reaching no farther than Himſelf? The Confirmation of Thoſe who were already Diſciples, and the Converſion of ſuch Gainſayers as were acquainted with it, were Ends which it ſeems moſt immediately calculated to promote. I do not ſee what particular Comfort it could be to St. *Polycarp* to foreſee that He ſhould be burnt alive; but it was certainly to the Comfort of the Church, and might probably tend to the Enlargement of it, to obſerve that Chriſt had not yet left his Diſciples without ſuch extraordinary Endowments as thoſe of Prophetical Viſions and Revelations. The ſame is to be obſerved, and was obſerved by me in other Inſtances, where ſuch Gifts did anſwer ſome perſonal End, that they anſwered likewiſe the farther Purpoſe of an Evidence of the Commiſſion and Support given them by Heaven. Perhaps We may judge the better of this by ſuppoſing it to be a preſent Caſe. Should Providence think fit to grant miraculous Powers again for the Converſion of Unbelievers of our Times, would Any be more likely to prove effectual than that of *Prophecy*? I queſtion whether after all the Difficulties which have been raiſed amongſt Us, concerning the

Powers

Powers of Nature, and the Obſcurity of Cauſes and Effects, This might not be the moſt convincing of Any. *Prophecy* is a ſolemn Call to Men to conſider and examine the Event; and when it plainly anſwers, may leſs admit of Evaſion, than a Miracle ſtrictly ſo called, which is wrought immediately in Any One's Preſence. At leaſt We could not ſay, that This had no Connection with the Claim to other Miracles, for This would clearly prove that Providence ſaw ſome ſupernatural Gifts ſtill neceſſary or expedient; and if ſome are eſtabliſhed, This will obviate all Objections againſt the Credibility of the Reſt. For it will be difficult to aſſign a Reaſon, why thoſe Gifts, which were merely perſonal, and granted for the particular Comfort of ſome few Individuals, reaching no farther than to themſelves, ſhould be continued; and yet thoſe, which were of more general Uſe for the Conviction of Unbelievers, and Confirmation of Chriſtians in the Faith, ſhould be totally withdrawn.

Dr. *M.* ſeems now to be aware of this, and to think that He had given too much Advantage by the forementioned Sentence. He now retracts the ſeeming Conceſſion, and chooſes to ſay with his Defender, *Let it be underſtood, that We diſpute the Facts.* The only additional Argument here uſed to invalidate

lidate them, is, that "the very Matter of "theſe Prophecies would render the Notion "contemptible to all Men of Judgment." "In one of theſe Paſſages St. *Ignatius* inti- "mates, that He had been inſtructed by the "Holy Spirit, concerning *the Diviſions of the* "*Church of Philadelphia.* And in another "St. *Polycarp*, by Means of a Viſion, is ſaid "to have foretold his own Death, and the "Manner of it, three Days before it hap- "pened." (P. 26, 27.) And What is there in the *Matter* of Either of theſe Prophecies that ſhould render them contemptible? Are They not parallel to others, which, if We believe the Scriptures, We know were given by Divine Impulſe? Does not St. *Paul* foretell ſuch Diviſions and Corruptions in the Church of *Epheſus*, where He is ſpeaking expreſſly of what the Holy Ghoſt witneſſed in an extraordinary Manner? *Acts* xx. Does He not very little before his Death, prophetically warn them of it, by ſaying that *the Time of his Departure was at Hand?* 2 Tim. iv. 6. Or if This be thought to have been eaſily foreſeen from his Situation at that Time, the Teſtimony of St. *Peter* is more deciſive. *Knowing this that ſhortly I muſt put off this my Tabernacle, even as our Lord Jeſus Chriſt has ſhewed me*, 2 Pet. i. 14. Now does the *Matter* of theſe Predictions render them contemptible?

temptible? If not, why is the very ſame Thing contemptible in another like Inſtance? And why are ſuch Objections introduced on all Occaſions by a profeſſed Believer, as are of equal Force, if of any, againſt the Authority of the Goſpel?

Farther, He ſhould have remembred that He was arguing here from the *Silence* of theſe Apoſtolical Writers. If therefore They claimed *any* of the Gifts of the Apoſtolick Age, this overthrows his Argument, even tho' We ſhould ſuppoſe thoſe Claims to be groundleſs. If They repreſent themſelves, or others their Contemporaries, as favoured with *extraordinary Illuminations* or *Viſions*, 'tis plain that they thought that Some at leaſt of the Gifts of the Apoſtolick Age ſtill ſubſiſted, and that they were not all actually withdrawn. Let Us review that whole Paſſage referred to in *Ignatius*, of which Dr. *M.* has given Us only one Clauſe, and that with a very viſible Air of Contempt. He might poſſibly have a very contemptible Notion of the Obedience due to Biſhops, and might not think Himſelf obliged to treat them with Reſpect, or even with common Decency, but very good Reaſons may be and have been aſſigned, why Obedience to Biſhops was then ſo particularly inſiſted on.---The whole Paſſage runs thus---*For although Some would have deceived me ac-*

cording to the Fleſh; yet the Spirit being from God is not deceived. For it knows both whence it comes, and whither it goes, and reproves the Secrets of the Heart. I cried whilſt I was with You; I ſpake with a loud Voice, Attend to the Biſhop, and to the Preſbytery, and to the Deacons. Now Some ſuppoſed that I ſpake this as foreſeeing the Diviſion that ſhould come among You. But He is my Witneſs, for whoſe Sake I am in Bonds, that I knew Nothing from any Man. But the Spirit ſpake, ſaying on this wiſe, &c. We ſee here that *Ignatius* repreſents Himſelf as incapable of being deceived by the Seducers of thoſe Times, becauſe aſſiſted by the Spirit of God; that this Spirit of God was able to reprove the *Secrets of the Heart*; that He foreſaw the Diviſions that ſhould come amongſt the *Philadelphians*, not by Information of Man, but by the Spirit; and that it was by this Spirit He had forewarned and inſtructed them in their Duty. The Admonitions and Inſtructions then given did indeed, as I have before obſerved, require no particular Inſpiration, being Advices, which might properly have been applied on any Occaſion; but the Foreſight of the Occaſion, was that which here ſhewed the extraordinary Aſſiſtance. Juſtly then from this Paſſage does Archbiſhop *Wake* infer that *Ignatius* was endued with a large Portion

Portion of the Spirit: And with Him concurs the learned Dr. *Smith*, who gives the ſame Interpretation of this Place. What then becomes of this boaſted Argument from the Silence of theſe Apoſtolical Fathers?

Dr. *M.* offers a farther Diſtinction to excuſe his Confuſion and Inconſiſtency on this Head. Firſt He ſays, that "it is allowed "on all Sides, that the Apoſtolic Fathers "make no Mention of any ſtanding miraculous Powers as indulged to the Church "in their Days." How can this be ſaid, after the Attempts which were made to ſhew, that They ſpoke of the Church as ſtill *bleſſed with every extraordinary Gift*, without any Diſtinction with Reſpect to the preceding Age, when ſuch ſtanding Powers are confeſſed to have been given? The Reaſon why They were not more explicit and large on this Subject, was obſerved, I think, by Every Writer that appeared againſt Dr. *M.* namely, that the Apoſtolick Fathers wrote only *practical* Exhortations to Believers, not *argumentative* Diſcourſes for the Conviction of Adverſaries; but this plain and weighty Reaſon Dr. *M.* thought fit to paſs over in Silence, neither diſproving nor evading it, but ſtill arguing on their ſuppoſed Omiſſion of it as a Proof that They knew Nothing of any ſuch miraculous Powers amongſt them. But

whatever was his own Opinion in this Matter, it was not fair to repreſent this as allowed by *all*, which He knew was diſputed by Several; that is, that They make no Mention of any ſtanding miraculous Powers in their Days. This however He gives as a Reaſon, why Viſions in thoſe Days could not in any Sort belong to the Queſtion in Diſpute: repeating again that they were merely Perſonal, which is not true of ſuch Viſions as were *prophetic*. But, He adds, when miraculous Powers were publickly claimed and offered to Examination, and theſe were particularly enumerated in the Catalogue, "then they "became the proper Subject of his Work, "and required an Examination as well as "any other Gifts." (P. 29.) But why ſo, if ſtill they were merely perſonal? or how came They to be leſs Perſonal, in the Time of theſe Fathers, than they were a Century before? There muſt be a Miſtake in ſome Part of the Argument or Other. Either theſe may be conſidered as of ſome Uſe in the Church for the Converſion of Heathens, or they have no Relation to his Queſtion, as it is ſtated at preſent; and on this Suppoſition He waſted his own Time, and miſemployed that of his Anſwerers, in arguing ſo long againſt them. Indeed if there was any Difference in the Caſe, it was more to his Purpoſe to have

diſproved

diſproved thoſe earlieſt Accounts of Viſions and Prophecies, which He once ſeemed diſpoſed to allow, than thoſe later Reports of particular Revelations, which He took ſo much Pains to invalidate. For if the former were genuine, if Prophetical Gifts continued in the Church, This will be a ſtrong Argument, not only from the Reaſon of the Thing, that other miraculous Endowments continued likewiſe, but alſo from the Expreſſions uſed by the Apoſtolical Fathers, for They could not, with any Truth or Propriety, have talked of being *bleſſed with every extraordinary Gift*, if They had one amongſt them, and not the reſt; nor could They well avoid ſpecifying the Diſtinction on ſuch an Occaſion. Whereas the Power of working Miracles may be ſuppoſed to have continued in the Church, notwithſtanding ſeveral of the After-Accounts of Viſions and Revelations ſhould be thought not to deſerve Credit. Several of theſe have been miſrepreſented, and have been found, upon Examination, not to relate to extraordinary and particular Revelations; (ſee Dr. *Church*'s *Vind.* P. 240, *&c.*) and of Thoſe which are really ſpoken of as ſuch, ſcarce any pretend to be Prophetical; Many of them are delivered merely upon Hearſay; Few of them were upon important Occaſions, anſwerable to ſuch as we read of in the Bible; None of

them are offered to Examination like the Miracles claimed in Evidence of the Truth of Chriſtianity: And therefore theſe latter may ſtand the Teſt, if the Former do not; for it will not follow, that becauſe ſome Miſtakes might happen in Caſes in which Men were liable to be impoſed upon, therefore They were guilty of wilful Fraud in Caſes which They could not but be ſufficiently informed in.

Dr. *M.* next charges his Oppoſers with changing Hands, taking up the contrary Side of the Queſtion, and attempting to confute Him by that very *Silence* of theſe Fathers with which He had been preſſing them. If He meant to hint any Thing of Inconſiſtency in this Manner of Arguing, it is a plain Miſrepreſentation. They do not allow that the Silence of the Apoſtolic Fathers on this Head can be proved; for They think that as much may be produced from them on this Head as can well be expected from their Subject and Manner of Writing. But They inſiſt farther, that Dr. *M*'s own Suppoſition of their Silence on this Article would not turn out to the Advantage of his Argument, but as far as it is of any Weight, may ſtrongly be urged on the other Side. We can, in ſuch Caſes only, judge from Circumſtances, what might be the Occaſion of the *ſuppoſed Silence*. Dr. *M.* ſuppoſes

poſes that if Miracles had *continued*, the Apoſtolical Writers would have mentioned it; I ſuppoſe that if Miracles had *ceaſed*, They would have mentioned it: Which now, as his Defender ſays, has the beſt Right and Claim to the Concluſion? I anſwer as before, They who give the beſt Reaſons for their Opinion. In the firſt Place then, it is not clear, (to ſay the loweſt) that They have not mentioned the Continuance of miraculous Powers amongſt them; but it is very clear that They have not mentioned their Ceaſing. Mr. *Toll* gave up their Diſclaiming ſuch Powers, and Dr. *M.* has not offered to vindicate what He ſuggeſted before on this Point; ſo that We argue on an unconteſted Silence in this Particular; whereas much is offered to ſhew that there is ſome Mention in thoſe Writers, of the Continuance of Miraculous Powers.

Again, their *Silence* in the former Caſe, if real, might be accounted for from the *Practical* Nature of their Writings, wherein They had no Occaſion or Call to mention the *ſtanding Evidence* of their Religion; whereas this ſame Practical Intent would have led them to mention the *Ceaſing of Miracles*, if they had ceaſed, in order to quicken them to higher Degrees of Virtue, which, on this Suppoſition, was now the only remaining Recommendation and Proof of their Religion.

Dr.

Dr. *M.* cites Part of my Reaſoning on this Head. "It is ſcarce credible, ſaid I, that "They ſhould no where take any Notice of "ſo great and ſudden an Alteration, as muſt "have happened, if the principal Leaders of "the Chriſtian Cauſe, and Governors of the "Church, had all at once been deprived, in "thoſe Times of Adverſity, of the Privileges "and Succours, which common Converts en-"joyed in the Generation immediately pre-"ceding." Dr. *M.* having obſerved, that "it is granted by all Proteſtants, that the Go-"vernours of the Church were, in ſome Age "or other, actually deprived of thoſe miracu-"lous Succours, which their Predeceſſors en-"joyed, *&c.* adds, thus Dr. *Dodwell*'s Argu-"ment is utterly confuted by Fact and Expe-"rience, as well as their own Conceſſions." (P. 31.) But certainly, the Conceſſion that they ceaſed *in ſome Age or other*, even on the Suppoſition that the Time was not mentioned by any Writer, would no way affect or confute my Argument as before repreſented. For there the Streſs was laid on the Improbability of their taking no Notice of ſuch an Event, if the principal Leaders of the Chriſtian Cauſe, and Governors of the Church, had *all at once* been deprived, *in thoſe Times of Adverſity*, of the Privileges and Succours, which common Converts enjoyed in the Age immediately pre-

ceding.

ceding. Whereas if miraculous Powers ceaſed not, till *thoſe Times of Adverſity* were paſt, and then ceaſed *gradually*, as they were leſs and leſs wanted, then it would be no Wonder, that a particular Account ſhould not be given of the exact Time when they were finally withdrawn, tho' the Argument would ſtill hold in its full Force with Reſpect to the Days of the Apoſtolic Fathers; when Perſecutions raged, when the Enemies of the Goſpel were triumphant, when Miracles were as much wanted as ever, for the Conviction of Gainſayers, and the Support of Believers.

In ſuch a Caſe, if Miracles had ceaſed *all at once*, when they were as much wanted as ever, it is not credible that They ſhould paſs over ſuch an Event in total Silence, without any Expreſſions of Lamentation, or Profeſſions of Reſignation, or Exhortations and Prayers ſuitable to the Occaſion. Whereas if the Caſe was, as We ſuppoſe it to be, that they ceaſed after the Civil Eſtabliſhment of this Religion, when Perſecutions ceaſed; when other Encouragements concurred with the Evidence already offered to make Way for the Reception of Chriſtianity; when Favours, when Honours and Profits attended the Profeſſion; then if We find no particular Notice taken of the Period when they ceaſed, yet We may very well account for it. The Ends, for

which

which they were originally given, being now no more, the Occaſion of their Ceaſing being viſible; This might prevent any great Degree of Surprize, and any Notion of the Neceſſity of recording it as an extraordinary Event. This Caſe was ſo apparently different from the former, that no Conceſſion of their having ceaſed in ſome After-Time, without any diſtinguiſhing Confeſſion of it, when it might reaſonably be expected that they ſhould ceaſe, can affect the Argument from the Silence of Thoſe who could not fail to have taken Notice of it, if They had *ſuddenly* been deprived of all ſupernatural Aſſiſtance, when They had all imaginable Occaſion for it, and all the Reaſon in the World to expect it.

Neither therefore is this Argument confuted by Fact and Experience, for as the Situation was not the ſame with the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity after the Rulers of the World were become of that Number, their Silence or their Account of the Diſcontinuance of Miracles amongſt them, does no way reach the main and principal Conſideration. Dr. *M.* however adds, as the moſt remarkable Circumſtance in the preſent Queſtion, that in all the " ſucceeding Ages, there is not a ſingle " Leader or Governor of the Church, who " either owns any ſuch Ceſſation, or does not " in the moſt grave and ſolemn Manner at-

" teſt

"teſt the Continuance of them in great Abun-
"dance to his own Age." Had He then for-
got his own Charge againſt St. *Chryſoſtom* and St. *Auſtin*, whom He repreſented as Guilty of Inconſiſtency for reporting ſome Miracles, when in other Paſſages which He cited from them, They owned and endeavoured to account for the Ceſſation of miraculous Powers amongſt them? In what Manner ſoever This is to be reconciled, yet They are Both expreſs Witneſſes againſt what is here aſſerted. And to them ſome others may be added. Some of them argue upon the Suppoſition; Others attempt to account for the Fact; and Several are expreſs in the Acknowledgment of it. I will only cite *Iſidore Peleuſiota*, who ſays in ſo many Words, that Miracles were ceaſed in his Time; (*Iſid.* IV. Epiſt. 80.) Thoſe who would ſee more Teſtimonies to this Purpoſe, may conſult Mr. *Brooke's* Examination, (P. 369.) Some of theſe cannot be ſaid to have contradicted Themſelves in this Article, and Thoſe who lie under this Charge, appear to me to be juſt as much involved in it as Dr. *M.* Himſelf, who once at leaſt ſeemed willing to grant, that there might be ſome Inſtances of miraculous Interpoſitions from Heaven, when yet the ſtanding Power of working Miracles for the Converſion of Heathens was withdrawn. This, which is his new State of the Caſe, was,

as

as I apprehend, their Old Diſtinction, and that by which They reconciled the foremen-tioned Declaration of the Ceſſation of Miracles with their After-Report of ſome ſupernatural Events. Their Reaſonings and Accounts ſhew their Meaning in theſe ſeemingly repugnant Aſſertions. They argue, that Miracles being granted for the Converſion of Heathens, they were now no longer neceſſary on that Account, when Chriſtianity was now eſtabliſhed amongſt them, by which They refer to the ſtanding Power; and thoſe Stories which They do relate, whether They were impoſed upon them or not, happened amongſt the Chriſtians Themſelves, for their ſuppoſed Inſtruction or Support, which, as Dr. *M.* now allows, is a very different Queſtion.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to mention an Objection, which would very obviouſly be raiſed againſt his former Management of this Argument, and his preſent State of it; namely, for what Reaſon He introduced Miracles into the Diſpute, which, by his own Confeſſion, have no Relation to it? His Anſwer is, that "it was "for no other, than to expoſe the trifling and "frivolous Nature of them," and to ſhew how fondly the Chriſtians of this early Age were diſpoſed to give a "miraculous Turn to every "unuſual Incident, which might happen to "take Place on any important and affecting

"Oc-

"Occaſion." (P. 35.) This very Attempt then implies, that if They were not ſo fondly diſpoſed, but were competent Judges of Miracles wrought amongſt themſelves, tho' not by a ſtanding Power for the Converſion of Heathens, much more muſt They be preſumed to be Judges of thoſe Powers which They claimed and offered to the Examination of Adverſaries; and therefore, if Dr. *M.* has failed even in this Attempt, it will turn ſtrongly againſt Him; and Every Inſtance which is offered of a miraculous Interpoſition from Heaven, will be a preſumptive Argument that the ſupernatural Gifts which They claimed, were really continued to them. Nay, the very Manner in which theſe Miracles were related, (thoſe for Inſtance, attending the Martyrdom of St. *Polycarp*) whether true or falſe themſelves, are yet a ſtrong and full Teſtimony of the Opinion and Perſwaſion of the Chriſtians of thoſe Times. Had They known that Miracles had ceaſed many Years before, (and they could not but have known it, if it had been ſo) that *Polycarp* Himſelf was endued with no miraculous Powers, and diſclaimed all Pretenſions to them, They could not have uſed ſuch Language, as They do throughout this Epiſtle.

Dr. *M.* ſeems next to charge his Oppoſers with a groſs Miſrepreſentation of Him. He ſays,

ſays, They "have ſtill the Confidence to af-
"firm, that He does not diſpute the Reality
"of them, but leaves Them in Poſſeſſion of
"Miracles as great and wonderful as any in
"the Chriſtian Church; that He ſtands con-
"victed by his own Conceſſions, and by ac-
"knowledging the Genuineneſs of the Epiſtle,
"confirms the Genuineneſs of the Facts re-
"lated in it; than which, ſays He, nothing
"can be more ſenſeleſs and abſurd." I ſhall have Occaſion preſently to refer to, and to retort the Acknowledgment in this laſt Clauſe; I ſhall hear only obſerve, that as yet no unwarrantable Confidence appears in his Adverſaries, except that They preſumed to differ from Him. They did not aſſert that Dr. M. did not diſpute the Reality of theſe Miracles, but that He had not diſproved them, and that in ſome Places He argued upon a Suppoſition of the Truth of them; that his Reaſonings were inconſiſtent; and that in the Particular Inſtance referred to, He was convicted by his own Conceſſions; not becauſe Every Fact muſt be genuine, which is related in a genuine Epiſtle; (as He would repreſent it) but becauſe This Caſe was ſo particularly circumſtanced, that if the Epiſtle be admitted to have been wrote by the Spectators, and if They were credible Witneſſes in the other Parts of their Report, no particular Objection can lie againſt

againſt this from the Nature of the Thing, the Miracles reported being as much the *Object of their Senſes*, and as ſtrongly atteſted by them, as any other Part of the Account: And thus I expreſſly ſtated the Caſe.

But it ſeems Dr. *M.* did not really ſpeak his own Opinion in this Caſe. When He called "*the circular Letter of the Church of Smyrna*, "one of the moſt authentic and celebrated "Pieces in all primitive Antiquity," He only ſpoke of it as it was held in the Church, and not as He thought of it Himſelf. This ſhould, I think, have been ſignified, or at leaſt hinted at firſt, that Others might not be charged with Miſrepreſentation for that, which now looks very like Prevarication in Himſelf. His *Defender*, who helped him out with a Diſtinction in a former Caſe, which He has thought fit to avow, had not the Diſcernment to find out this, for He ſays in expreſs Words, "Dr. "*M.* does certainly acknowledge the Letter "to be *genuine*." (P. 32.) And tho' the Dr. thought it ridiculous and unjuſt to charge Him with weakening the *Faith of Hiſtory*, yet if *One of the moſt authentic and celebrated Pieces in all Primitive Antiquity* be at laſt no other, than a Forgery, and was conſidered as ſuch by the Dr. Himſelf, even whilſt He gave it that high Character, I ſee not how that Conſequence will be evaded, or how We ſhall

know when He means what He ſays, ſo as to be able to form an Argument againſt his real Opinion. He adds, "when I mention the "Advertiſement annexed to the End of it, "concerning the miraculous Diſcovery of the "ſame Piece by a Revelation from *Polycarp*, "will Any imagine that I could believe ſo "ſilly a Fiction, tho' I made no Reflection "upon it." But He did not deſcribe this under the ſame Character of One of the moſt *authentic and celebrated Pieces of Primitive Antiquity*, nor was it ever eſteemed ſuch, and therefore this Caſe is by no Means parallel; nor does it follow from his After-Mention of a known Forgery, that it was as plain that He did not believe the Genuineneſs of the Letter itſelf, which He ſtill acknowleges to have been generally held as authentic by the Church.

But tho' We are now told that the Miracles attending the Martyrdom of St. *Polycarp*, whether true or falſe, have no Relation to the Queſtion in Diſpute, yet He cannot be content to leave it, but is reſolved that We ſhall have the Circumſtance of the *Dove* to diſcredit all the reſt. This, He tells Us, "will upon a fair and critical Examination, "appear to be as authentic a Part of the "Original Piece, as any other miraculous "Fact related in it." (P. 36.)

" The firſt Edition, ſays He, of the entire
" Epiſtle, was publiſhed by Archbiſhop *Uſher*,
" with the Paſſage of the Dove in it, from
" a *Latin* Verſion, the oldeſt Copy, as He
" tells Us, of the whole Piece, that was any
" where extant; ſuppoſed to have been writ-
" ten ſoon after the Time of *Euſebius*, and to
" be the ſame, which is mentioned to have
" been publickly read in the Churches of
" *France*, till the ſixth Century: Which
" Copy Archbiſhop *Wake* alſo declares to be
" ſo well atteſted, that We need no farther
" Aſſurance of the Facts which it contains.
" All the *Greek* Copies are of a later Date
" than the *Latin* Verſion, yet all of them
" retain this Article of the Dove: And from
" a Collation of theſe the learned *Cotelerius*
" and *Ruinart* publiſhed their ſeveral Edi-
" tions of this ſame Epiſtle; both of them,
" tho' Papiſts, very candid and judicious In-
" quirers into the genuine Monument of
" Chriſtian Antiquity: And in the laſt Edi-
" tion alſo, ſet forth by that eminent and
" Proteſtant Critic M. *Le Clerc*, who was
" never ſuſpected either of Superſtition or
" Credulity, the Dove ſtill kept its Place,
" without any Reflection or Cenſure upon it
" by the Editor." (P. 37.)

Never were more Errors committed in the Compaſs of ſo ſhort a Paragraph. Had Dr. *M.*

diſcovered half ſo many in the Performance of an Oppoſer, He would have triumphed much over his Ignorance, but as This was confeſſedly no Part of *his* Character, there was no Danger of its being retorted. But inſtead of attempting to aſſign the Cauſe of theſe complicated Miſtakes, I ſhall proceed to point them out. Now Archbiſhop *Uſher* firſt publiſhed this Epiſtle entire in the *Greek*, from a MS. in the *Bodleian*; and this is the MS. whoſe Genuineneſs Archbiſhop *Wake* thought ſo well atteſted, and from this Edition all the Others have been publiſhed. Archbiſhop *Uſher* mentions alſo another *Greek* MS. in the *French King's* Library. *Lambecius* alſo (Comment. in Bibliothec. Vindobon, L. 8. P. 88.) gives Us an Account of a third in the Library at *Vienna*; but this is imperfect: Whether it has the Article of the *Dove*, or whether it was ever collated, I know not. Theſe are all the *Greek* MSS. of which I can find any Mention made. The Archbiſhop did alſo at the ſame Time with the *Greek* publiſh the *Latin* Verſion of this Epiſtle from two MSS. the one in the *Cotton* Library, the other in that of the Church of *Saliſbury*; but This, as He Himſelf tells Us, is a Paraphraſe rather than a Verſion; nor does He ſay, that either the Verſion, or either of the Copies of it that He uſed, were older

than

than any of the *Greek* Copies, or written ſoon after the Time of *Euſebius*; nor a Word does He ſay about its Antiquity, only this, that He ſuppoſes this Verſion to be the ſame which *Gregory* of *Tours* mentions as being publickly read in the Churches of *France* in the ſixth Century ("Integra vero cum alio-"rum Sanctorum Actis Græce, & in Ba-"rocciano Oxonienſis Academiæ, & in Me-"diceo Regis Gallorum; Latinè vero & in "Eccleſiæ Sariſburienſis, & in Cottonianæ "Bibliothecæ Codice MSto reperitur. Quam "quidem Verſionem, vel Metaphraſim po-"tius, cum Græco Textu conjunctim, eo "libentius hic edere placuit, quod eandem eſſe "exiſtimem quam in Eccleſiâ Gallicanâ ſuo "tempore publicè legi conſueviſſe Gregorius "Turonenſis ſignificat. Uſſerij. Præf. ad Act. "Ignat. &c.") *Ruinart* indeed adds (Ruinart Præf. ad Acta Polycarpi) (not that the Copy was written but) that the Verſion was made ſoon after the Time of *Euſebius*; but what Reaſon or Authority He has for this, He does not inform Us. Dr. *M.* however improves upon both his Authors. He tells us it was read in the Churches of *France till the ſixth Century*,—which is very different from and implies a great deal more than—*in the ſixth Century*. Other learned Authors had quite a different Notion of this Verſion which

the Dr. ſets forth ſo pompouſly. Dr. *Smith* (Præf. ad Ignat. Epiſt. &c.) calls it (and ſo on Compariſon it will appear to be) a very bad Paraphraſe, "Latina Verſio ex Codici-"bus Cottoniano & Sariſburienſi A. D. Uſſerio "deſumpta eſt, potius Paraphraſis appellanda, "paſſim mendoſa, inepta & corrupta, quam "tamen ob Antiquitatem, Fructumq; aliquem, "inde colligendum, retinendam volui—"Compertiſſimum habeo quemlibet Exſcrip-"torem (quod de Græcis quoque Librariis dicendum eſt) de ſuo, Explicationis Cauſâ, "prout Animo habebat, addere conſueviſſe."

As to Archbiſhop *Wake*, the Copy that He ſpeaks of is (as I juſt now ſaid) not the *Latin* Verſion, but the *Greek* MS in the *Bodleian*: And of this He is made to ſay a great deal more than ever He did ſay. He ſays, this MS. *is ſo well atteſted, that We need not any farther Aſſurance of the Truth of it.* (P. 16. Ed. 1693.) But Dr. *M.* makes Him ſay, that *We need no farther Aſſurance of the Facts which it contains.* But Archbiſhop *Wake* knew very well, and Dr. *M.* could likewiſe obſerve, when it ſuited his Purpoſe, that tho' a MS. was in the main allowed to be genuine, yet this could give Us no Aſſurance of the Genuineneſs of every Clauſe and Word of it, much leſs of the Facts which it contains. The Librarian of *Cambridge* could

not

not but know, that there are frequent Diſputes and Complaints, among the Learned, of Marginal Notes creeping into the Text,---of the Careleſsneſs of Tranſcribers;---and, what is ſtill more, of their adding Comments and Fictions of their own.

But We are told that *all the Greek Copies retain this Article of the Dove* (all which are two, or at the moſt three) and *that from a Collation of theſe, the learned* Cotelerius *and* Ruinart *publiſhed their ſeveral Editions.* Theſe learned Men are very much obliged to the Dr. for the Candor, Judgment and Diligence that He has complimented them with. Far be it from me to detract from their Praiſes; but in the preſent Caſe it happens unfortunately that *Cotelerius* Himſelf tells Us, He had not the good Fortune to meet with any MS. of this Epiſtle; and therefore He publiſhed his Edition from that of *Uſher*. The ſame did *Ruinart* by the *Greek* Original. He compared indeed the *Latin* Verſion with two MSS. one in the *Colbertine* Library, the other in that of the Monaſtery of *Preaux*, the latter of which omits this Article of the Dove, and the other ends before the Paſſage where this Article occurs. None of theſe Editors indeed thought themſelves at Liberty to alter the Copy from whence They publiſhed; and therefore They All of them re-

tain this Article; but They All, *Uſher*, *Ruinart*, *Cotelerius*, and *Le Clerc* paſs this Reflection upon it, that it was not to be found either in *Euſebius* or *Ruffinus*. Archbiſhop *Wake* in his Tranſlation thought Himſelf more at Liberty, and therefore He omitted what He judged to be ſpurious. But it ſeems the Archbiſhop ſhould have given Us the Story entire; for "He obſerves upon the "Authority of Mr. *Le Moyne*, that *Lucian* is "ſuppoſed, under the Character of the *Vulture* aſcending from the funeral Pile of "*Peregrinus*, to ridicule the *Pigeon* of *Polycarp*." (P. 38.) 'Tis true, that the Archbiſhop mentions this as a Conjecture of Mr. *Le Moyne*; but 'tis ſuch a Conjecture, as neither *He* nor *Le Moyne* Himſelf paid any Regard to (Var. Sac. Proleg. ad Tom. 1.) *Le Moyne*, as well as the Archbiſhop, denies the Genuineneſs of this Paſſage, and argues ſtrenuouſly againſt it: But then He adds, that if it were genuine, He ſhould then have thought that *Lucian* alluded to it. But Dr. *M.* Himſelf has taught Us how to give another Account of this Fancy of *Lucian*. He might probably allude to the Eagle, which was uſually let out of the Funeral-Piles of the *Roman* Emperors. However, to ſtrengthen this Evidence, We are told that *Lucian* was an Apoſtate from Chriſtianity. This again

appears

appears to be a Miſtake, for it has no other Foundation than this only, that *Suidas* calls Him Ὑπαίγορος (in other Copies Διάγορος) which Some have tranſlated a *Preacher*.

Another Confirmation of the Genuineneſs of this Paſſage the Dr. draws from a like Miracle mentioned by *Prudentius* in one of his Hymns, where He makes a *Dove* to fly out of the Mouth of *Eulalia* at the Time of her Martyrdom. (P. 39.) But how does it appear that *Prudentius* ever knew or heard of St. *Polycarp*'s Dove? And why may We not as well ſuppoſe, that the Interpolator of this Epiſtle took the Hint from *Prudentius*, as that *Prudentius* took the Hint from this Epiſtle?—But "a Fiction of ſo ſtrange a "Kind would hardly have been hazarded, "He thinks, by ſo pious a Writer, if there "had not been a Precedent for it." And which is moſt likely to have made the Precedent, and to have hazarded a Fiction of ſo ſtrange a Kind, the whole *Church of Smyrna*, in the ſecond Century, or *Prudentius*, a Poet in the fifth Century, an Age in the Dr's own Judgment, abounding ſtill more in Fables and Fictions?

We have already ſeen the Dr's Skill in amplifying the Teſtimonies for this his favourite Dove. We ſhall find Him full as well ſkilled in the Art of diminiſhing. In his

Free Inquiry He had told Us that "Mr. "*Dodwell* and Biſhop *Wake* profeſs to have "dropt this Circumſtance for the Sake of "rendring the Narrative the leſs ſuſpected;" whereas They Both expreſſly ſpecified, that they did not drop it barely for the Improbability of the Fact, but for Want of proper Authority to ſupport it. He has now in his *Vindication* done the Archbiſhop the Juſtice to cite his Words on this Occaſion. "And "indeed beſides the Strangeneſs of ſuch an "Adventure, I cannot think, had any ſuch "Thing truly happened at his Death, that "not only *Euſebius* ſhould be ignorant of it, "but that neither St. *Hierom*, nor *Ruffinus*, "nor the *Menæa* of the *Greek* Church ſhould "have made the leaſt Mention of it."—All this the Dr. with one Stroke of his Pen reſolves into the Silence of *Euſebius* only. And why ſo?—Why, "the Silence of theſe "later Writers is, it ſeems, of no Weight at "all: They followed only the Tranſcript "of *Euſebius*." (P. 41.) But how does it appear, that They followed only the Tranſcript of *Euſebius*? None of them, I think, tell Us ſo, nor does Any of them refer to *Euſebius*. "But They were glad to get rid "of ſo ridiculous a Fiction." This is all again the Dr's own Imagination, and quite inconſiſtent with what the ſame fertile Imagination

gination has elſewhere attributed to theſe very Fathers. Theſe ſame Men, who diſcarded this as a ridiculous Fiction, were (if you will believe Dr. *M.*) "extremely credu-
"lous and ſuperſtitious, ſcrupling no Art or
"Means, whereby they might propagate
"their Principles;—of a Character from
"which Nothing could be expected that
"was candid and impartial, nothing but
"what a weak or crafty Underſtanding
"could ſupply towards confirming the Pre-
"judices with which They happened to be
"poſſeſſed;—roundly affirming as true,
"Things evidently falſe and fictitious." (Pref. P. 31, 32.) And in this very Interval, it ſeems, when Chriſtians were Such as are here deſcribed, ſcrupling Nothing, and aſhamed of Nothing, yet endeavouring to get rid of this as a ridiculous Fiction, ſtill, according to this ſame contradictory Account, it ſo happened that this very Fiction was at that Time in ſuch good Credit among them as to give Occaſion and afford a Precedent for *Prudentius* to hazard another of the ſame Kind.

The later Writers being thus eaſily diſmiſſed, and their Omiſſion of this Article accounted for by a Suppoſition, which is not grounded on the leaſt Reaſon or Authority, and which is inconſiſtent with the main Ob-

jection

jection elſewhere made againſt them, *Euſebius*'s Evidence is endeavoured to be taken off by telling Us, that *Euſebius* does not give Us here the entire Narrative, but an Abſtract of it only, or an Abridgment. (P. 39.) It is ſtrange that the Dr. could fail of obſerving the Difference between an *Abridgment* and an *Extract*. *Euſebius* Himſelf tells Us, that He gives Us this Narrative κατα λεξιν--- *Word for Word*. And We find accordingly that He left out only the Beginning and End of this Epiſtle; the Reſt of it We have here entire; and it agrees exactly, bating ſome ſlight Variations, with the other Copies of this Epiſtle, excepting only this Article of the Dove, and that other Clauſe, which compares St. *Polycarp*'s Body in the Flames to Bread, which is baked; which probably are both Interpolations, and proceeded from the ſame Hand. The Advertiſement annexed at the End in the Name of *Pionius*, is, as I before obſerved, allowed to be a Fiction; and 'tis no improbable Suppoſition, that the Author of this Fiction might tamper alſo with the Epiſtle itſelf.

There are ſome farther Circumſtances which ſeem much to favour this Opinion. An Obſervation may be offer'd even on the Account itſelf, independently of theſe Reflections on the external Evidence relating to it,

it, which may ſhew the great Probability of the Interpolation of the Paſſage in Queſtion. The Circumſtance referred to comes in here very abruptly and breaks in upon the Narrative: Here is a Story of a Dove coming out, and not a Word ſaid afterwards of it, whither it went, or what became of it. Had the Authors of this Epiſtle mentioned ſuch a ſurprizing Thing, whether true or falſe, They would probably have dwelt longer upon it. They could ſcarce have avoided taking Notice of the Manner, or End, or Uſe of its appearing, or making ſome Kind of Reflection or other upon it. Whereas if it crept in by the Miſtake of a Letter, thro' the Ignorance or Careleſſneſs of the Tranſcriber, or was deſignedly inſerted as the ſlight Mention of a Circumſtance, which was elſewhere to be enlarged on, on either Suppoſition We may account for the Manner in which it is introduced, which is exactly ſuch, as We ſhould naturally ſuppoſe it to be in the one or the other of theſe Caſes.

Again, this Article of the Dove is no where repeated, as far as appears, by any ancient Author, except in the *Life* of St. *Polycarp*, ſaid to be wrote by one *Pionius*. This very Perſon may poſſibly be the Author of the Copy in the *Bodleian*, who has added the *P. S.* at the End, pretending that He tranſcribed

ſcribed it from an ancient Copy, which He found out by a Revelation from St. *Polycarp*. And if ſo, He might be the Author of this Interpolation too, which He might foiſt in to confirm his own Story, which He had added of his own Invention in the *Life of this Saint*. Who this *Pionius* was, no Body can tell, nor when He lived. *Euſebius* mentions a Perſon of this Name, who ſuffered Martyrdom at the ſame Time with St. *Polycarp*. But this *Life of St. Polycarp* is of much later Date, the Work of ſome fabulous Author, who might poſſibly borrow this Name of *Pionius*, deſigning moſt abſurdly to father his ſpurious Offspring on Him mentioned by *Euſebius*. But this is offered only as a Conjecture.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to tell Us that "the Co-"pies of this Narrative appear in *Euſebius*'s "Time to have been very rare." (P. 40.) But how this appears, or what Proof He has for it, He does not inform Us. We muſt be content to take it on his Word. "We can-"not doubt therefore, ſays He, but that He "wilfully dropt it out of his Abſtract, be-"cauſe Every Body would ſee it to be a moſt "flagrant and ſhameful Forgery." It is not eaſy to find what Premiſes this Concluſion is founded upon. Did He judge of *Euſebius* from his own Manner of quoting Authors?

Or

Or was it for his Purpoſe that it ſhould be ſo, and therefore We muſt not doubt of it? Were the Firſt Ages of Chriſtianity the moſt fabulous? And did They in *Euſebius*'s Time begin to be aſhamed of the Fictions of former Ages? Or is this *Euſebius*'s uſual Way of quoting Authors? Does He bear the Character of a fabulous and faithleſs Hiſtorian? And does He ſtand convicted of ſuch Forgeries in other Inſtances? If None of theſe Things can be ſaid, We muſt beg Leave to acquit Him of ſo foul a Charge, and to diſmiſs all theſe idle Surmiſes as the Fiction of Dr. *M*'s own Brain.

In reciting the Teſtimonies of the following Writers in Relation to ſupernatural Gifts, Dr. *M.* rightly obſerves that He is charged with "having added one to the Liſt, which "does not belong to it, and which None of "the Fathers have any where claimed, "namely, *the Gift of expounding the Scriptures.*" (P. 44.) His Deſign in aſcribing ſuch a Claim to them was obvious, in that He thought thereby to prove them Guilty of Forgery, by pointing to ſome weak Expoſitions of Scripture which could not be ſuppoſed to proceed from Inſpiration. He was told therefore that this was ſaid without any Foundation, for that tho' there was Mention made of expounding the Myſteries of God,

there was not a Word ſaid of the Holy Scriptures. This He is pleaſed to call *a pitiful Way of quibbling*; "the Word *Scriptures*, is "not expreſſly mentioned in the Teſtimony, "therefore, the Gift of expounding them "cannot be implied in it." Truly I think this is a very material Obſervation, and very forcible Inference, that thoſe Writers Themſelves have not mentioned any Thing at all about the *Scriptures*, and therefore did not mean any thing about them. But Dr. *M.* enquires what other Meaning the Gift of *expounding the Myſteries of God* can have, and charges his Oppoſers with "having gi-"ven no other in its Place, but leaving the "Words to ſhift for Themſelves." Whereas I had ſaid clearly and expreſſly, "Certainly "a Man might have a Knowlege of the "Chriſtian Myſteries ſupernaturally infuſed "into Him, or a happy Talent of explaining "them particularly communicated to Him, "without an Infallibility of interpreting all "the Paſſages of the Old Teſtament." I know not what Gifts could be more *diſtinct* than an immediate Knowlege of the Chriſtian Syſtem infuſed by Inſpiration, independent of the written Accounts of it; and a certain Knowlege of the Senſe and Connection of thoſe written Accounts, by which even *They* might be offered in Evidence to Others. A

Man

Man might have the former in a ſupernatural Manner for particular Purpoſes, as St. *Paul* tells Us, He Himſelf had, who yet might not have the latter, nor might make any Pretenſions to it. The Myſteries of God, as they are mentioned by *Irenæus*, may be allowed to refer, as the Dr. ſays, to the ſame Myſteries, which are affirmed by Chriſt and his Apoſtles to be revealed to Us in the Holy Scriptures, but his Inference will by no Means follow, that therefore "the Gift of "expounding them cannot poſſibly ſignify "any Thing elſe than the Gift of expound-"ing the moſt abſtruſe and difficult Paſſages "of the Scriptures, both of the Old and "New Teſtament." The Myſteries here ſpoken of, are as He Himſelf ſays, the ſame with the Doctrines taught by the Goſpel, that is, thoſe revealed Truths which relate to the End and the Means of our Redemption. The Gift of expounding them was that of teaching them with Truth, Conſiſtency and Perſpicuity, and This Gift in different Perſons might be the Effect of natural or ſupernatural Attainments. Where the Knowlege of theſe ſaving Truths was learnt by Inſtruction from Others, or by a diligent Study of the Holy Scriptures, there a Man might attain this Gift without any Kind or Degree of Miracle; but where it was imme-

diately infuſed from Heaven, there it was juſtly ranked amongſt ſupernatural Endowments. But tho' in either Method a Man might know all that was neceſſary to Salvation, and might juſtly be eſteemed an able Expounder of the Myſteries of God, it would not follow that He muſt therefore be an infallible Interpreter of all the Hiſtorical and Prophetical Parts of the Old Teſtament, or all the argumentative Parts of the New; which related perhaps particularly to the People to whom they were written, and depended on ſome Local Cuſtoms, or Opinions, or Phraſes, or even Methods of Reaſoning. It does not follow that becauſe a Man had one Gift, therefore He had every One, yet it can only be by this Connection that it can be inferred, that becauſe a Perſon was taught in a very different Method, namely, by Inſpiration, the ſame Doctrines which Others are taught in the Goſpel, therefore He muſt neceſſarily likewiſe underſtand every difficult Paſſage in the Bible from One End of it to the Other. This Diſtinction is ſo obvious and was ſo clearly expreſſed before, that unleſs Dr. *M.* expected an implicit Reſignation of our Underſtandings to his poſitive Aſſertions, it might have deſerved ſome Notice and Attempt of Evaſion.

I had

I had obſerved likewiſe that the Gift ſpoken of in the New Teſtament underſtood by Interpreters to mean an *inſpired Knowlege* of the true Senſe of a *particular* Paſſage of the *Prophets*, for confirming or explaining ſome particular Doctrine of the *Goſpel*, was *occaſional* only, and owing to *ſudden Impulſes*. To this Dr. *M.* attempted no Anſwer, and yet if this be admitted, Nothing can be inferred to his Purpoſe from the Teſtimony before Us. For though other Chriſtians, beſides the Apoſtles, were ſometimes *occaſionally* inſpired, in praying, propheſying, or expounding the Scriptures in their religious Aſſemblies, yet No One, that I know of, ſince the Times of the Apoſtles has pretended to claim the Gift of expounding the Scriptures in that extenſive Senſe deſcribed by Dr. *M.* viz. the Gift of expounding the Scriptures by a Divine Inſpiration, (Inqu. P. 116.) a divine and infallible Interpretation of the Scriptures, (Pref. P. 33.) and that of the moſt abſtruſe and difficult Paſſages of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Teſtament (Vind. P. 47.) This I ſay has been claimed by None, excepting the Popes of *Rome*, and perhaps ſome wild Enthuſiaſts. The Gift of propheſying or preaching, and That of expounding the Scriptures, were diſtinct Gifts, and are plainly diſtinguiſhed by St. *Paul*. The Words of *Irenæus*

relate to the former, which He affirms to have continued till his Time; If it be thought probable that the other alſo ſubſiſted at the ſame Time, and if Any One ſhould think that *Irenæus* intended to include both, it would not be neceſſary to diſpute it with Him. I would only obſerve that *Irenæus* does not affirm this of Himſelf. In the Apoſtles Days All were not *Prophets*; and therefore this Gift might be granted to Others, and not to *Irenæus*. But what I mean principally to inſiſt on here, is, that if *Irenæus* had affirmed this of Himſelf, it would not follow, that becauſe He had ſometimes *occaſionally* been favoured with ſuch Impulſes, therefore He was inſpired in every Thing that He preached or wrote. Does He ever in any Part of his Works pretend to Inſpiration? Or does He deliver his Expoſitions of the Scriptures as infallible Interpretations? In his Preface He ſpeaks quite another Language. He tells Us that He deſigns to expoſe the Errors of the Hereticks to the beſt of his Power, and that according to his moderate Talent He ſhall give Occaſion to Others more fully to confute them. He excuſes his Want of Art and Skill, and tells the Perſon that He addreſſed Himſelf to, that He doubts not but He will improve upon what He has obſerved, as being more able

than

than Himſelf. And yet this is the Man, whom the Dr. would repreſent (and that on the Strength of a ſingle Expreſſion no way relating to Himſelf) as ſetting up for a Pope, and pretending to be an infallible Interpreter of Scripture.

But He adds, that "beſides the Paſſage of "*Irenæus*, from which alone the Thing it-"ſelf may fairly be inferred, We learn from "the expreſs and direct Teſtimony of *Gre-*"*gory*, called the Wonder-Worker, that the "Gift of expounding the Holy Scriptures "was actually claimed, and reckoned as one "of the moſt eſteemed and excellent Gifts "of thoſe primitive Times; and was poured "out in the largeſt Meaſure, upon his Ma-"ſter *Origen*." (P. 54.) But this Teſtimony does not come up to the Point, nor anſwer to his Account of it in ſeveral Particulars. It is not the *Claim* of a Perſon, who pretended Himſelf to be poſſeſſed of this Endowment, but a Compliment from a Scholar in a Panegyrical Oration on his Maſter at leaving Him. Neither do the Words, however high, neceſſarily imply that He thought Him inſpired; nor muſt We always lay the higheſt literal Senſe on the Expreſſions in a Panegyric. He ſays, *Origen* "has received "this greateſt Gift from God, with an "abundant Share of it from Heaven, to be

" the Interpreter of the Words of God to " Men, as if God Himſelf were ſpeaking, " and to expound them to Men, that Men " alſo might hear them." (P. 46.) Now as *Gregory Thaumaturgus* certainly believed, that the Grace of God was neceſſary to aſſiſt Men in the Diſcovery of Truth, and particularly in the Study of the Holy Scriptures, (however Dr. *M.* may ridicule that Doctrine) there is Nothing here which He might not ſtrictly ſay, as believing that God had particularly bleſſed his Endeavours, and enlightned his Underſtanding with his Holy Spirit, without meaning that his Interpretations of Scripture were immediately dictated to Him by Revelation. Some late Expoſitors have excelled this Way, and ſhould I ſay of them, that God had bleſſed them with the greateſt and beſt Talent, that of expounding his Holy Word, and had granted them his gracious Aſſiſtance to that Purpoſe, I ſhould ſay no more than the Language of the Goſpel would juſtify, and ſhould not ſuſpect that Any One would believe, that I thought them really inſpired. Or if I was thought an Enthuſiaſt, or was really ſo, and did believe that They were favoured with Revelations, yet ſince They did not make any ſuch Pretenſions Themſelves, the moſt high-flown Expreſſions from an Admirer of them would be no

Proof,

Proof, that the Gift of an inſpired Interpretation was claimed in our Days.

It ought therefore principally to be added that *Origen* Himſelf not only never claims ſuch a Gift, but on the contrary diſclaims it in many Parts of his Commentaries, and other Works, particularly Lib. con. Celſ. 7. P. 701, Ben. Ed. *

But Dr. *M.* proceeded to ſhew, that *Juſtin Martyr in particular lays Claim to this Gift of expounding the Scriptures as indulged Him in an extraordinary Manner, by the ſpecial Grace of God*; and in his Vindication He ſays, in a contemptuous Manner, that "theſe more "learned Doctors inſiſt that He has wholly "miſtaken the Matter, thro' his Ignorance "of the proper Senſe of the Words, *&c.*" (P. 47.) I charged Him indeed with putting a wrong Senſe on *Juſtin*'s Words, but whether through Ignorance, or not, I pretended not to ſay. But what muſt We charge Him with, when He profeſſes not to know the proper Senſe of theſe Expreſſions, *the ordinary Grace and the ordinary Aſſiſtance of the Holy*

* Εἰκὸς μὲν ἦν εἶναι λόγες πολλῷ τῆς ὑμετέρας ἕξεως σοφωτέρες, τὰς δυναμένας ἀποδεικνύναι ψευδόμενον ἐν τούτοις τὸν Κέλσον, καὶ ἐρήμους τὰς προφητείας· Πλὴν καὶ ἡμεῖς κατὰ τὸ δυνατὸν ἡμῖν, πεποιήκαμεν, τὰ, ὡς φησι Κέλσος, παροιστρα, καὶ πάντη ἄδηλα, πρὸς λέξιν διηγησάμενοι ἐν τοῖς πραγματευθεῖσιν ἡμῶν εἰς τὸν Ἡσαΐαν, καὶ εἰς τὸν Ἰεζεκιὴλ, καὶ εἴς τινας τῶν δώδεκα.

Ghoſt, and to have looked after it without receiving Satisfaction, in the Writings of his Oppoſers? He repreſents me in particular as writing with great *Perplexity* and *Confuſion* on this Subject. He cites me as ſaying that "the "Word χάρις or Grace is never uſed to de- "ſcribe a ſupernatural Gift, but known to "mean that ordinary Co-operation of the "Holy Spirit with our beſt Endeavours, "which is common to all Believers;" and then He repreſents me as treating it in the next Words as having no Meaning at all, but as "a common Way of ſpeaking, which Pious "Perſons accuſtom themſelves to, of aſcribing "every good Thing which They poſſeſs to "the Grace of God:" But I added expreſſly what the Dr. thought fit to omit, that they accuſtomed themſelves to this Way of ſpeaking, *according to the plain Doctrine of Scripture*, and therefore I could not poſſibly treat it as a Way of ſpeaking that had no Meaning at all, unleſs I meant to ſpeak in that irreverent Manner, of the Holy Scripture. I ſpoke not of well-meaning, tho' ill-inſtructed Chriſtians, who might uſe a Word of Courſe without underſtanding it; but I ſpoke of "all Perſons of true Piety, as accuſtoming "themſelves to ſpeak of every Kind and De- "gree of their Proficiency as owing to the "Grace of God, *according to the plain Doc-*

"*trine*

trine of Scripture?" And is not this the plain Doctrine of Scripture? Are We not therein expreſſly told, that the Power both of diſcerning and practiſing our Duty is owing to the aſſiſting Grace of God? Are We not therein reminded of a Truth, which We ſorrowfully experience, that our Nature is corrupt, and unable by its own Strength to turn to God, and to do Works acceptable to Him? Are We not taught that the Reparation of this loſt Strength, that the Poſſibility and the effectual Endeavour of pleaſing our Maker, is owing to the Operation of his Holy Spirit within Us? Let us attend to ſome Paſſages of the Holy Writings, which prove this Point. *The Preparations of the Heart in Man*, ſays Solomon, *are from the Lord*, Prov. xvi. 1. *I will put my Spirit within You, and cauſe You to walk in my Statutes, and Ye ſhall keep my Judgments and do them*, ſays God Himſelf by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, xxxvi. 26. The Prayers in the *Pſalms of David* are founded upon this Principle and expreſſed in this Manner. He applies continually for Divine Aſſiſtance to enable Him to diſcern the Truth, and to live according to it. In particular He ſays, *O Give me the Comfort of thine Help again and eſtabliſh me with thy free Spirit.* St. *Paul* tells Us, that *We are not ſufficient of Ourſelves, to think any Thing as of Ourſelves,*

but

but our Sufficiency is of God, 2 Cor. iii. 5. that *We are ſtrengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man*, Epheſ. iii. 16. that *We abound in Hope thro' the Power of the Holy Ghoſt*, Rom. xv. 13. that *thro' the Spirit of Wiſdom the Eyes of our Underſtanding are enlightned*, Epheſ. i. 18. that *the Spirit of God dwelleth in Us*, Rom. viii. 11. that *the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities*, Rom. viii. 26. that We are *the Temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in Us*, 1 Cor. iii. 6. that the *Manifeſtation of the Spirit is given to every Man to profit withal*, 1 Cor. xii. 7. that *God hath ſealed Us and given Us the Earneſt of his Spirit in our Hearts*, 2 Cor. i. 22. that *according to his Mercy He ſaved Us by the waſhing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*, Tit. iii. 5. with many other Expreſſions to the ſame Purpoſe. St. *Peter* adds, that *our Souls are purified in obeying the Truth thro' the Spirit*, 1 Pet. i. 22. Neither is this mere *Peteriſm* and *Pauliſm*, as a late Writer was pleaſed to call ſuch Proofs drawn from the *Epiſtles*, as if they were of leſs Authority than the *Goſpels*, but it is the Doctrine likewiſe of our Bleſſed Saviour Himſelf. He tells Us, that *without Him We can do Nothing*, John xv. 5. that *Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, He cannot enter into the Kingdom of God*, John iii. 5. that *He that*

believeth

believeth on Him, out of his Belly ſhould flow Rivers of living Water; and *this* the Evangeliſt ſays, *ſpake He of the Spirit, which they that believe on Him ſhould receive*, John vii. 38, 39. that *if any Man love Him and keep his Words, his Father would love Him, and They would come unto Him and make their Abode with Him*, John xiv. 23. and how this Divine Reſidence and Abode was to be underſtood is explained, v. 17. *The Spirit of Truth, He dwelleth with You and ſhall be in You*: And finally He aſſures us, that *God will* not fail to *give the Holy Spirit to them that aſk Him*, Luke xi. 13.

And as We have Scriptural Authority for the Subſtance of this Doctrine, that the Spirit of God is aſſiſting to Us in every good Thought, and Word, and Work, ſo We have the ſame Authority for the Term by which it is expreſſed. We know that χάρις in its original Meaning ſignifies no more than any Grace or Favour in general, but We find it applied in the Sacred Writings to ſignify particularly that Aſſiſtance granted by the Spirit to ſupply the Defects and correct the Faults of our corrupt Nature, and to enable Us ſtill to diſcharge all that is required of Us. When St. *Paul* lay under ſome particular *Temptation*, which He ſtiles *the Meſſenger of Satan*, and from which He thrice prayed to be delivered,

liveried, The Anſwer was, that inſtead of being delivered from it, He ſhould be ſupported under it †; *My Grace is ſufficient for thee, for my Strength is made perfect in Weakneſs*, 2 Cor. xii. 9. And to omit many other Inſtances, the Author of the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, where He is ſpeaking of the Aid of Infirmities, uſes this very Expreſſion, *Let Us therefore come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that We may obtain Mercy and find Grace to help in Time of Need*, Heb. iv. 16.

Dr. *M.* ſays "He knows theſe Terms, of "the *ordinary Grace* and the *ordinary Aſſiſtance* "*of the Holy Ghoſt*, are frequently uſed among "Chriſtians, but chiefly by that Sort, who "know not what they mean, or rather mean "nothing at all by them." But ſince They only uſe herein the Language of the Sacred Writings, and profeſs to mean hereby the ſame Thing which is ſo often repeated therein, namely, the Help given by the Holy Spirit to our natural Infirmities, They cannot be liable to the Charge here brought againſt them, without Conſequences which will ſhock every ſerious Chriſtian.—Dr. *M.* goes on to repreſent me as contradicting Myſelf for ſpeaking of this ordinary Grace as conſiſtent with the Uſe of a Man's own Reaſon, and yet allowing that as it is a Power added to

† Ἀρκεῖ σοι ἡ χάρις μου, &c.

our

our Nature, it may in ſome Senſe be called ſupernatural. As not the *Truth* but the *Conſiſtency* of this Doctrine is here made the Queſtion, it may be ſufficient to refer to the tenth Article of our Church, wherein We are thus inſtructed. "The Condition of Man after "the Fall of *Adam* is ſuch, that He cannot "turn and prepare Himſelf by his own na-"tural Strength and good Works to Faith "and Calling upon God. Wherefore We "have no Power to do good Works pleaſant "and acceptable to God without the Grace "of God by Chriſt preventing Us, that We "have a good Will, and working with Us "when We have that good Will." I refer not to this at preſent as a deciſive Authority, tho' methinks it ſhould have ſome Weight with All who have ſubſcribed to the Truth of it; but to ſhew that Ignorance and Nonſenſe are not chargeable on thoſe pious Chriſtians, who uſe this Style, and that there is no Contradiction in the Manner in which I had expreſſed it. For the Compilers of this Article have not told Us, that We are merely paſſive in the Work of our Converſion, or that the Grace of God takes away the Uſe of our own Reaſon, or the Exerciſe of our own Choice. They teach Us rather that it has reſtored theſe to Us, and that thro' the preventing and aſſiſting Grace of God, We now have

have it in our Power to know and obey our Maker as effectually for his Acceptance as if We had never loſt that Capacity. Whether this Power of returning to our Duty was the Privilege of Nature, or of the aſſiſting Influence of the Divine Spirit, added ſince the Corruption of our Nature, We could not perhaps by our own Reaſon have determined, but when the Scripture has determined this Point for Us, and has aſſured Us that it is owing to the latter, We muſt not preſume to be Wiſer than our Maker, and inſiſt that it is the former, that is, that it is our own original unforfeited Gift. As being then an additional Strength communicated to Us beyond what was left to Us after the Fall of our firſt Parent, it may in ſome Senſe be called *ſupernatural*, but as the Method of communicating it is ſuch as We do not outwardly diſtinguiſh from the Workings of our Nature, and experience only by the Happy Effects of it, and is offered to all; it is therefore rightly termed the *ordinary Grace* of God, and diſtinguiſhed from every Thing which is viſibly *ſupernatural* and *miraculous*. This prevents a Poſſibility of that Confuſion and different Uſe, which Dr. *M.* ſuppoſes may be made of this Principle in Theological Diſputes; where He has ſo ridiculed the great Doctrine of our *Sanctification* by the Bleſſed Spirit, as muſt,

I ſhould hope, open the Eyes of all his well-diſpoſed Advocates. I muſt do Mr. *Toll* the Juſtice to obſerve, that He has uſed this Chriſtian Style and Way of ſpeaking, which Dr. *M.* repreſents as "uſed chiefly by thoſe, "who know not what They mean, or ra-"ther mean Nothing at all by them." Nay He has gone farther, and ſpoken expreſſly of the *extraordinary Aids of God's Holy Spirit.* (P. 12.) even where He mentioned them in Contradiſtinction to any Thing ſupernatural or miraculous, and meant no other than a great Degree of Divine Aſſiſtance concurring with rational Conviction. This Way of ſpeaking is ſcriptural and juſt, whatever Offence it may give to Gainſayers; and ſince there is this fundamental Difference between Dr. *M.* and his Defender, it may be of ſome Uſe to admoniſh the latter what Cauſe He is engaged in, that He may not contribute to ſerve an Intereſt which is very far from his Intention.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to review the Paſſages, from whence He had inferred that *Juſtin Martyr* claimed the ſupernatural Gift of expounding the Scriptures. And here I ſtand charged with two Blunders in giving a wrong Senſe and a wrong Tenſe to the Verb παρακαλῶ. But it is not pretended, that Either of them does any way affect or alter the

Force

Force of the Argument, and therefore it is very little material either Way to inſiſt on or to defend them. However both Points are, I think, ſufficiently defenſible, if it was worth while to dwell much upon it. The Word παρακαλῶ is often uſed in the Senſe of *praying* both by Sacred and Prophane Writers, as the firſt Lexicon that is conſulted, may convince Us. And it is principally ſo uſed in the New Teſtament, which ſeems moſt to the preſent Purpoſe. Thus Mark i. 40. Καὶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὸν λεπρὸς παρακαλῶν αὐτὸν, καὶ γονυπετῶν αὐτὸν, καὶ λέγων αὐτῷ· Ὅτι ἐὰν θέλῃς, δύνασαί με καθαρίσαι· Again Mark vii. 32. Καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτῷ κωφὸν μογιλάλον, καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα ἐπιθῇ αὐτῷ τὴν χεῖρα· But leſt theſe Inſtances of Praying to Chriſt ſhould not be admitted as a Proof of praying to God, We may add that in other Paſſages the ſame Verb is uſed of Petitions unqueſtionably offered to our Maker. Our Saviour Himſelf ſpeaking of making Application to his Father, thus expreſſes it. Ἢ δοκεῖς ὅτι οὐ δύναμαι ἄρτι παρακαλέσαι τὸν πατέρα μου, Mat. xxvi. 53. and again St. Paul, ὑπὲρ τούτου τρὶς τὸν Κύριον παρεκάλεσα, 2 Cor. xii. 8. Dr. *M.* indeed aſſerts that "it is a Verb, which implies no Sort of Reference to Prayer, or any "Act or Office, which can be addreſſed to "God, but to Man only in the Senſe of exhorting,

" horting, admoniſhing and entreating." (P. 51.) The Authority of the Sacred Writings will, I truſt, be ſufficient to refute this Aſſertion. Nor is the Anſwer to the other Objection, with Reſpect to the Tenſe more difficult. The ſecond future * of this Verb is the very ſame with the preſent, παρακαλῶ—and therefore may in Strictneſs of Grammar be conſtrued—*I will pray.*—Should not a Man have remembred his Grammar and conſulted his Lexicon, before He charged Others with not having the leaſt Tincture of *Greek?* And would it not have been proper too for a Chriſtian Divine to have looked into the Greek Teſtament on ſuch an Occaſion? However This is not material to the Point in Hand. In either Tenſe and either Tranſlation of the Word the Argument will hold ſtrongly to the Purpoſe to which it was urged. *Juſtin* could have no Reaſon to *pray* that All might, and ſtill leſs, I think to *exhort* All to be Partakers of a miraculous and extraordinary Gift, eſpecially conferred on himſelf.

Dr. *M.* however ſays that " He ſhall once " more affirm, that this Paſſage contains an " expreſs Claim of an extraordinary Gift; and " that the Context alſo, from which his Op- " poſers labour to draw a contrary Senſe, " confirms his." (P. 50.) The Objection

* And ſo is the Firſt in the *Attick* Dialect.

raiſed againſt *his* Interpretation, was, that *Juſtin* could not be ſuppoſed to pray or exhort them to be inſpired, if He ſpoke of his own Inſpiration, No, ſays Dr. *M.* now, He did not deſire that They might have the ſame Gift which He had, but that They might make a good Uſe of that extraordinary Talent, which He had of interpreting the Scriptures by attending to his Interpretations, and embracing that true Senſe of them which he was now qualified to teach them. The Reaſon aſſigned for this new Conſtruction and entire Alteration of the Martyr's Sentence and Meaning, is, that "He could not on "any other Account be apprehenſive of any "Puniſhment from God at the laſt Day, "but for the Neglect of imparting and com-"municating to Others the Benefit of that "extraordinary Gift, *&c.*" (P. 52.) Certainly He would be anſwerable for the Neglect of his Gift, whatever it was, whether attainable by the common Grace offered to All, or the ſupernatural Aſſiſtance afforded only to ſome, and He muſt think it his Duty to enforce earneſtly on all that Knowlege of the Scriptures which was neceſſary to Salvation, tho' He did not attain to it Himſelf by particular Inſpiration. This Manner of Concluſion was very proper to ſhew them his Senſe of the *Importance* of coming to a right

Underſtanding of the Sacred Writings, and of the Duty which He lay under of contributing to it to the beſt of his Power; but has no Relation to any miraculous Method of interpreting it. He goes upon the Suppoſition that the Grace of underſtanding the Scriptures was offered to All, and therefore exhorts all to be Partakers of it; whereas if He had ſpoken only of his particular Expoſitions to be received by thoſe who compoſed his Audience, his Expreſſions had certainly been more confined. Neither would He in this Manner have ſpoken of the *Cauſe*, and have ſpecified the *Grace* to which He attributed his own Underſtanding of the Scriptures, and exhorted All to be Partakers of *that Grace*; but He would certainly have ſaid what He meant; He would have ſpecified the *Effect*, and inſiſted on their receiving thoſe Expoſitions, which He was inſpired to deliver. Whereas his Words are clear and expreſs, that He exhorted All to partake of the Grace which He had partaken of; which was no other than that of interpreting the Prophecies of the Old Teſtament by the Revelation offered to all the World by Chriſt and his Apoſtles in the New. He was not ſpeaking to *Chriſtian* Brethren, who might perhaps have owned his Authority, but He was holding a Controverſy with *Jewiſh* Adverſaries, who

could not be ſuppoſed to pay any Regard to his Pretence to Inſpiration, if That had been his Meaning. He addreſſes Himſelf very properly to them upon their own Principles, reaſons with them out of the Scriptures which They acknowleged, and profeſſes to owe his own Proficiency herein to the *Grace of God*, by which Title the Goſpel itſelf is ſometimes diſtinguiſhed in the New Teſtament. He exhorts all the *Jews* to be guided by the ſame Light, and to embrace the ſame Grace, which in other Words was exhorting them to turn Chriſtians. And as this Exhortation was founded on Argument, on a View of many Types and Prophecies which the *Jews* admitted, and which He ſhews to be both explained and fulfilled in the Hiſtory of our Saviour's Actions and Doctrines, in this Light it was rational and pertinent, and might be hoped to have ſome good Effect. Whereas had He ſollicited them to receive his particular Expoſitions as inſpired, when They did not ſo much as acknowlege the general Faith, which He profeſſed, This had been abſurd and inconſiſtent, and his Propoſal could expect no other Reception than that of Contempt and Ridicule.

There are two other Paſſages of *Juſtin Martyr*, which He had before produced, to

prove

prove this Claim to Inſpiration in his Interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; which were both particularly ſhewn by the Context to mean no ſuch Thing, but to refer to the general Doctrines of the Goſpel made known to Us by the gracious Revelation of Chriſt: Dr. *M.* in his Vindication attempts only to obviate the Objection from the Uſe of the *Plural* Number in thoſe Paſſages, from whence it was inferred, that *Juſtin* was not ſpeaking of any Gift peculiar to Himſelf, but of ſome Privilege common to all the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity. Dr. *M*'s firſt Remark is, that "They might "have obſerved, that One of theſe ſame "Teſtimonies begins with a Plural Verb, "which yet cannot admit any other In-"terpretation than of the Singular Num-"ber, as being addreſſed only to the ſingle "Perſon of *Trypho*." (P. 53.) This again is a Miſtake in Fact, and would have been ſtiled great Ignorance, or Negligence, or by ſome harſher Name, had it occurred in the Performance of an Adverſary; The Paſſage referred to is the laſt of Thoſe which were cited by Dr. *M.* on this Occaſion, and which begins thus, Ὅπωδε ἂν ἡμᾶς ποτε, &c. *Can ye ever think*, &c. Now this the Dr. ſays, was addreſſed to the ſingle Perſon of *Trypho*, whereas Nothing can be more clear and ex-

 preſs,

preſs, than that this was addreſſed to Him and his Company. He had told *Trypho* in the Words immediately preceding, that "*He had endeavoured to repreſent thoſe Things with as much Brevity and Conciſeneſs, as the Caſe would bear for the Sake of Thoſe who had attended Him that Day.* To which *Trypho* returns, that *He had done well, yet He would have him underſtand that ſhould He repeat them again more at large, it would be a Pleaſure to Him and Thoſe that were with Him, to hear them.* To which *Juſtin* replies in the Paſſage referred to, but beginning it expreſſly with an Addreſs to them All. Ὀιεσθε ἂν ἡμᾶς ποτὲ, ὦ ἄνδρες, &c. Dr. *M*'s next Remark is, that "this indeed is a common Cuſtom with all "Writers to Uſe the Plural Number *We* "and *Us*, when they expect to be under-"ſtood as ſpeaking only of themſelves;" and he is pleaſed to exemplify his Remark in ſome Quotations from my Anſwer to Him. And here He diverts Himſelf with ſome pretty intelligible Hints, as if He thought me not the Author of my own Letter, and now calls that the *true Synodical Stile*, which He had juſt before told Us was a common and cuſtomary Way of Speaking. The Inſinuation perhaps had not deſerved Notice, had not the Caſe been circumſtanced as it is; but I muſt have been guilty of groſs Prevarication

varication, and a wilful Lye, had I publiſhed the Collection of Others in that Manner, with that Account which I gave of it in the Preface. The Truth was, as it was there repreſented; It was a private Letter, communicated to No One till it was finiſhed, and was altered only in a ſingle Sentence after it was communicated. This Alteration came from a Perſon whoſe Approbation of it much induced me to make it publick, whoſe Name it would be an Honour to me to mention; and who is ſince taken to the Reward of his exemplary Life and Labours. But neither is the Remark itſelf ſtrictly true, as Dr. *M.* has ſtated it, that it is a common Cuſtom with Writers to uſe the Plural Number, when they expect to be underſtood as ſpeaking only of themſelves. They certainly mean in ſuch Caſes to expreſs what They conceive to be the Sentiments of thoſe who concur with them in the general Opinion, and do not uſe the *regal* or *ſynodical* Stile, to expreſs the Importance of their own Perſons, but in Expectation of being underſtood to explain the Notion or Principle of thoſe, who avow the ſame Cauſe. Thus when his *Defender* ſaid, "Let it be underſtood that *We* diſ-"pute the Facts." (P. 38.) I do not imagine that He intended to ſignify merely his

own Opinion, nor do I infer from hence that He had Dr. *M.* or any other Coadjutor at his Elbow; but I ſuppoſe that He meant by this Kind of Expreſſion to fix the Foundation on, which, as He apprehended, the Reſt of Dr. *M*'s Advocates, as well as Himſelf, intended to maintain the Argument. Such Phraſes from private Perſons are, I think, always ſo underſtood; nor can the Argument from the Uſe of the Plural Number be ſo evaded. Tho' the Writer or Speaker be ſingle, He is ſuppoſed in ſuch Caſes to ſpeak of more than Himſelf, and would talk in a new and unintelligible Stile, if He did not.

Dr. *M.* ſeems ſenſible of this, and therefore after labouring the Point in vain, He determines that "it is Nothing to the Purpoſe, whether *Juſtin* ſpeaks here only of "Himſelf, or of a Number of Chriſtians: "For if He affirms either of Himſelf or of "All, that They were inſpired by God with "the right Interpretation of his Scriptures, "that is the whole which He contends for." (P. 54.) He had before repreſented the *Martyr* as challenging this as his peculiar Privilege, as *granted by the ſpecial Grace of God to Himſelf*; but when it was ſhewn that He ſpoke of ſome Grace and Favour common to all Chriſtians, now the Anſwer is, that it is

the

the ſame Thing if He aſſerted that They were all inſpired. But this very Circumſtance would have been a Proof, that He could not ſpeak of Inſpiration, if the Expreſſion had been doubtful; and much more when the Term itſelf is that which ſignifies common and ordinary Grace, this of the *Univerſality* of the Diſtribution of it is a Confirmation of that Senſe of it. It was not credible that All Chriſtians were inſpired in the Interpretation of the Old Teſtament, and therefore when He ſpeaks in the Plural Number of Himſelf and the Whole Body of Believers without Limitation, as coming by *Grace* to underſtand the Scriptures, it is very plain that He meant of that general Light, which the Belief of Chriſtianity threw upon the former Writings both Hiſtorical and Prophetical.

Dr. *M.* however "thinks that it will ap-"pear unqueſtionably to every Man unpre-"judiced, who conſiders the joint Force of "the three Teſtimonies which He has "produced in Proof of it, that *Juſtin* ſpoke "of Chriſtians being inſpired by God with "the right Interpretation of the Scriptures." (P. 54.) As this is entirely an unſupported Opinion, not founded on a Review of thoſe Teſtimonies themſelves, nor on any Anſwer given to the plain Expoſitions of them which

were

were before offered, it can be of no Weight with any who do not pay implicit Regard to Dr. *M*'s Authority and Aſſertions; and I ſhall take the Liberty to ſuppoſe the contrary, that all unprejudiced Perſons will ſee that in thoſe Paſſages He did not, and could not ſpeak of particular Inſpiration. Dr. *M.* however adds, that "*Juſtin* is not in theſe "Teſtimonies talking of any common or "ordinary Points of the Scriptures, but of "the moſt abſtruſe and recondite Paſſages "of the Old Teſtament, in which, as in "a Veil, the chief Evidences of the *Meſſiah* "were ſuppoſed to have been wrapped up." (P. 54, 55.) This, as far as it is true, is not of the leaſt Service to the Dr's Interpretation. For *Juſtin* does not undertake to explain a particular dark Paſſage or two by immediate Inſpiration, but He is ſhewing argumentatively, that the whole Tenour of the *Jewiſh* Diſpenſation was predictive of the Evangelical. He illuſtrates many Paſſages by their Completion under the Goſpel, and ſhews how thoſe Revelations, which *God at ſundry Times, and in diverſe Manners had made in Times paſt unto the Fathers by the Prophets*, were preparatory to that clearer Revelation, which at length He had made *unto all Men by his Son*. In this View He refers to ſome Predictions which before

were

were unintelligible, and ſome Inſtitutions which were unaccountable, and points to their real Meaning and Uſe as introductory to the great Scheme of our Redemption by Chriſt. And when He has done this, and given a better Account of the *Jewiſh* Writings and Ceremonies, than They could do Themſelves, He goes on very properly to improve this into an Argument of the Truth of that Revelation which He profeſſed. He appeals to the *Jews* with whom He was converſing, whether in their own Judgment theſe Diſpenſations could have born ſuch an exact Analogy and Relation to each Other, if Both had not had the ſame Divine Author. And here I ſhall uſe Dr. *M*'s own Tranſlation, only retaining the *Plural* Number, as it is in the Original, which will ſhew that *Juſtin* ſpoke as a Member of the Church, as One of the whole Society of Chriſtians. *Do Ye think, that We could ever have been able to underſtand theſe Things from the Scriptures, if by the Will of their Author, We had not received the Grace to underſtand them.* He plainly infers that this rational Interpretation of the Old Teſtament (with which the *Jews* profeſſed themſelves pleaſed, tho' They did not yet own themſelves convinced) which Chriſtians by their farther Light were enabled to offer, was a Proof that the ſame

Holy

Holy Spirit, which dictated the Writings of the Old Teſtament, had likewiſe inſpired the Authors of the New. The Explanation of the One by the Other, was ſo eaſy and natural, and the View and Deſign of the Whole Scheme in Both ſo conſiſtent and important, that Each was illuſtrated and confirmed by Each, and the Author of the Former might from hence be concluded to be the Inſtructor of the latter. The Inference was ſtrong and concluſive, and particularly applicable to the *Jews*, but has no Relation to, or Connection with the ſuppoſed Claim of Inſpiration in the particular Perſon then ſpeaking; but depends on the Knowlege which Every Chriſtian had, or might have from the Revelation of the Goſpel. There is no doubtful Term uſed which might give Occaſion to any ſuch Miſtake about a ſupernatural Gift of expounding the Scriptures, nor is there any Thing in the Context which can expreſs or imply it; but there are ſeveral Circumſtances which apparently exclude it.

Dr. *M*'s laſt Refuge on this Head is ſuch again as He would have derided in an Oppoſer. Some learned Men, it ſeems, amongſt the Papiſts have ſo underſtood it, and interpreted this Paſſage of *Juſtin*'s ſupernatural Talent in interpreting the Scriptures. But I thought Dr. *M.* had wayed the Point of

Authority

Authority in the preſent Queſtion, and had referred the Deciſion of it to our own Judgments, and to the Reaſon of the Thing. This was becauſe He well knew that the Weight of Authority would caſt the Scale againſt Him; yet ſtill when it ſeemed to favour his Purpoſe, He could condeſcend to call in the Teſtimony of Members of the *Romiſh* Communion, whoſe Superſtitions and received Opinions, in Spite of all their Learning, led them into many ſuch Errors. But All, as far as I can perceive, are now for a *Free Inquiry*, as well as Dr. *M.* and will not have their Judgment precluded by the Sentence of two Popiſh Writers. The ſame Reaſons, which prevail againſt Dr. *M*'s Interpretation, are of as much Force againſt *theirs*, and tho' They and He intended to make a very different Uſe of their Opinion in this Point, yet We need not ſcruple to pronounce them all equally miſtaken in it.

The next Miracle brought under Review in the *Vindication*, is that of *raiſing the Dead*. Dr. *M.* quotes me as ſaying that on this Article *there is great Streſs to be laid*, and conſents that the Iſſue of the Whole may reſt upon it. But whatever my Opinion might be of the Importance or Evidence of this Article, I did not expreſs it in this Place. I had repeated his Quotation from *Irenæus*, that

" the

"the Miracle of raiſing the Dead was fre-
"quently performed *on neceſſary Occaſions.*"
Theſe laſt Words I diſtinguiſhed by putting them in *Italicks*, and went on to obſerve that there was great Streſs to be laid on them. By the Error of the Printer indeed it is, "there is great Streſs to be laid on *this* "*Cauſe*," but the Impropriety of that Word in that Place, and the Connection of the following Sentences might eaſily have ſhewn that the true Copy was, *on this Clauſe*. For I argued from hence, that Dr. *M*'s Account of the great Frequency of this Miracle in every Pariſh, &c. muſt be a Miſrepreſentation; that as *Irenæus* here limited it to *neceſſary Occaſions*, the Frequency ſpoken of could only be *comparative*, &c. The Streſs that I laid on *this Clauſe* was ſo apparent that I can ſcarce think it could be miſtaken without Wilfulneſs. What was probably meant by the Limitation of this Miracle to *neceſſary Occaſions*, I have already endeavoured to ſhew, and Dr. *M.* has offered Nothing new on it in this Place *.

The

* *Dr.* M. *had in his* Free Inquiry *put a falſe Conſtruction on* Irenæus's *Words. He had interpreted the Words* — τῆς κατὰτόπον ἐκκλησίας πάσης,—*every Pariſh or Place where there was a Chriſtian Church; and here in his* Vindication *he makes another Addition to his Author, and makes him ſay this Miracle was frequently performed* in thoſe Days, *tho'* Irenæus *neither limits this*

The other Part of his Objection was, "that ſo wonderful a Fact, if it had been "frequent, muſt have made great Noiſe in "the World, and been celebrated by all "Writers." To which it was replied by all his Anſwerers, that it could not be expected that *Heathen* Hiſtorians ſhould record ſuch Facts as made againſt themſelves, and would

this Frequency to his own Days, nor affirms this Miracle to have been wrought in every Place or Pariſh. But we are told, that "as his Words limit it to no particular Place, ſo they neceſſarily "imply it to have been common alike to all Places, wherever "there was a proper Occaſion, &c." (P. 51.) Very true, wherever there was a proper Occaſion. *But did ſuch Occaſions happen in every Pariſh? He Himſelf, a few Pages after, argues that there never could be any ſuch Occaſion: He muſt give Us Leave to ſay that theſe neceſſary Occaſions could not occur very frequently; and therefore We inſiſt that the Frequency here ſpoken of could be only* comparative. Irenæus *does indeed uſe the Word* πολλακις, frequently; *but then every Body knows that ſuch Expreſſions often admit of ſome Latitude, and the Limitations here added oblige us ſo to underſtand it here. Such a Miracle could not often be neceſſary, nor could it often be judged proper for the whole Church in any Place to aſſemble to make ſuch a Petition. It is beſides obſervable that in both the Places of* Irenæus, *where this Miracle is mentioned, the very Manner of Expreſſion ſeems to denote it to have been extraordinary and uncommon. Other Miracles are ſpoken of in the* preſent Tenſe, *and ſaid to be then common and abounding in the Church. This is ſpoken of ſeparately and diſtinctly without any Limitation to the preſent Time; as much as to ſay, that, as other Miracles were then common, ſo even of this there had been Inſtances not a few. The Whole then, which can be concluded from this Paſſage in* Irenæus, *is, that ſince the Apoſtle's Days there had been ſeveral Inſtances of this Miracle; but yet not ſo many as to force the Aſſent of all obſtinate and prejudiced Perſons, or to oblige all Hiſtorians to record them.*

involve

involve them in Self-Condemnation for not turning Chriſtians. Dr. *M.* thinks it an Anſwer to this Obſervation, to give a great Encomium of the Heathen World at that Time; to inſiſt on their laudable Curioſity, their Love of Truth, their Deſire of Knowlege, their Integrity in acknowledging their Conviction. He repreſents it as Nonſenſe and Abſurdity to ſuppoſe that They would not attend to ſuch Sort of Evidence, or that They would ſtifle the Conviction that it wrought in them. But this favourable Account of the Philoſophers is with Reſpect to the greater Part of them, a Miſrepreſentation, and no other than the Contrivance of an Expedient to clear Himſelf of a preſent Difficulty, to uſe his own Words. I have already had Occaſion to ſpeak to this Queſtion in Anſwer to Mr. *Toll*, and ſhall only here repeat, that it is no Abſurdity to ſuppoſe that Unbelievers do and will act abſurdly and wickedly. The Teſtimony however of the Compilers of the *Apoſtolick Conſtitutions*, whoever they were, may be thought of more Weight in this Caſe, as they ſpeak of the Failure of Conviction even in the Exerciſe of miraculous Powers, and endeavour to guard againſt any Surprize on ſuch an Obſervation by referring to former like Inſtances, wherein a corrupt Heart had blinded the Spectators againſt the

Force

Force of the moſt apparent Miracles. "For "all Wicked Men are not moved by Mira- "cles; — for neither did the *Egyptians* be- "lieve in God, when *Moſes* did ſo many "Signs and Wonders; neither did the Mul- "titude of the *Jews* believe in *Chriſt* who "was like *Moſes*, when he cured all Manner "of Diſeaſe and Infirmity among them? "So neither do ſupernatural Signs prove per- "ſuaſive to All, but to Thoſe only who judge "fairly and candidly *". I conclude there- fore, in direct Oppoſition to Dr. *M.* that the Reader will not think it ſtrange, that Men who know any thing of Human Nature, or the Hiſtory of Paſt Ages, can reaſon in this Manner, or imagine that an Heathen, tho' He had ſeen the Fact performed before his Eyes, could reſolve to ſtifle the Impreſſion, and perſiſt to deny the Reality of it. Thoſe, who believe the Bible, muſt know there have been many ſuch Inſtances, many Examples of thoſe who have withſtood the Evidence of Miracles; and whatever Cauſes might occa- ſion this Effect in them, may well be ſup-

* οὐδὲ γὰρ πάντες οἱ ἀσεβεῖς ὑπὸ τῶν θαυμάτων ἐντρέπονται· — ὅτε γὰρ οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι ἐπίστευσαν τῷ θεῷ, Μωυσέως τοσαῦτα σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα πεποιηκότος· ὅτε τὰ πλήθη τῶν Ἰουδαίων τῷ ἐκ Μωϋσέως χρίσαντι πᾶσαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ἐν αὐτοῖς θεραπεύσαντα — ὅτως οὐ πάντας δυσωπεῖ τὰ σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ μόνους τοὺς εὐγνωμόνας. Apoſt. Conſt. Lib. VIII. C. 1.

poſed to have wrought the ſame in others. St. *Paul*, at a Time, when Miracles are allowed to have ſubſiſted in the Church, obſerves that *not many Wiſe Men after the Fleſh were called*, and yet they had the ſame Curioſity, and Love of Truth, and Deſire of Knowlege in the Apoſtolical Age, as in the Centuries immediately ſucceeding. Whatever therefore may be offered to account for the Want of Succeſs in their Converſion, when miraculous Evidence was unqueſtionably offered, will be of equal Weight in the Caſe now under View.

But ſuppoſe the greater Part of the Heathens had all theſe good Qualities aſcribed to them; why then they muſt have been convinced by theſe ſupernatural Facts wrought in their Preſence, and Dr. *M.* thinks it abſurd to ſuppoſe the contrary. On this Suppoſition then They became Chriſtians, and this is another Reaſon, why no Account of theſe Miracles is to be expected from *Heathen* Hiſtorians. Thoſe who conſidered them with Attention and Candor, are ſuppoſed to have been wrought on by them, and then their Teſtimony falls under that of *Believers*; and Thoſe who would not liſten to them, or who rejected them, under the Notion of Magick, or Legerdemain, or any other Evaſion, could not be expected to record to Poſterity what they thought

thought not worth their own Notice. The Anſwer therefore to Dr. *M*'s. Objection remains in its full Force on every Suppoſition. Thoſe who acknowledged the Reality of theſe Miracles, muſt, if they were conſiſtent, acknowlege the Truth of the Cauſe in the profeſſed Defence of which they were wrought: There were Thoſe who did ſo, and of Courſe became Apologiſts for the Chriſtian Religion, inſiſting on the Continuance of theſe miraculous Powers amongſt them. *Juſtin Martyr*, for Inſtance, was a Perſon of this Character, a Philoſopher, diſtinguiſhed by great Curioſity, Love of Truth, Deſire of Knowlege, and Integrity in owning Conviction. In theſe Circumſtances he became a Convert, acknowleged the Reality of Chriſtian Miracles, and has recorded to Poſterity the Claim that was made to them in his own Time. Such Perſons might be expected to mention them, and have mentioned them, and are in every reſpect unexceptionable Witneſſes. But an *Heathen* Hiſtorian, who, thro' Inattention, or any other Cauſe, did not believe theſe Miracles, muſt have judged ill indeed to have ſtuffed his Hiſtory with ſuppoſed Legends, of which He did not believe a Syllable Himſelf. Or ſuppoſe, which perhaps was no uncommon Caſe, that an inquiſitive Heathen was *doubtful* upon the

whole, unable to withſtand the Evidence of the Reality of thoſe Miracles, yet equally at a Loſs to reconcile the Belief of them with ſome preconceived Notions, or to account for ſome Doctrines with which they were immediately connected; in ſuch State of Scepticiſm, *Silence* might be the moſt reaſonable and prudential Method, and might equally preſerve him from the Charge of Inconſiſtency by Believers, and from Cenſure or Diſcountenance by Heathen Magiſtrates. This may probably be conjectured to have been the Caſe of *Joſephus* with Reſpect to the Miracles of Chriſt and his Apoſtles. It may be ſaid, it has been ſaid, that if thoſe wonderful Facts had been ſo frequent in *Jeruſalem*, as they are repreſented to have been by the Evangeliſts, they muſt have made ſo great a Noiſe in the World, that the famous Jewiſh Hiſtorian could not have omitted to have mentioned them; or however muſt have inſiſted more on them, if it ſhould be allowed that He has mentioned them at all. Now it ſeems very likely that He might be in ſome Kind of *Suſpence* about them, and might be apprehenſive of very different Conſequences to be drawn by Friends or Enemies from the Report which he ſhould make of them; whereas He ſhould neither ſpeak againſt his own Conſcience, nor be involved in any Difficulty

ficulty in ſpeaking according to it, if He omitted any Mention of them, and of Courſe any Judgment about them. Whatever was the Cauſe of his Silence, it is not the leſs certain that thoſe Miracles ſpoken of in the Goſpel were really wrought, becauſe of his Omiſſion of them; nor is it any Objection to the Other Evidence, which may be offered for the Continuance of this Power in the Church of *raiſing the Dead*, that Heathens, who might not know it, or believe it, and who, as long as they continued Heathens, muſt be ſuppoſed to diſcountenance the Belief of it, did not contradict themſelves to record it.

The ſame Obſervation will lead to an Anſwer to the other Objections which are offered on this Head. Dr. *M*'s Remarks are different on this Point, juſt as a different Purpoſe was to be ſerved. They are, as He has repreſented thoſe of his Anſwerers to be, ſuited to the Caſe before Him, and are made exactly to tally with the Difficulty which was to be evaded. At firſt, "One "End for which Miracles was granted, was "to enable the firſt Preachers to bear up "againſt the diſcouraging Shocks of popular "Rage and Perſecution." Now this Uſe is entirely ſunk in the *Vindication*, and "the "End of all Miracles is ſaid to be to create

" Faith and Conviction." Now the Martyrs wanted none to confirm their Fortitude; They longed to haſten out of the World as faſt as they could, and it would have been Miſery and Mortification to them to have been thrown back into it again. This Repreſentation is calculated to exclude *Irenæus*'s Account of *raiſing the Dead*, and to ſhew that there could be no *neceſſary Occaſion* for working ſuch a Miracle by the united Prayers of the Church: To which another of his own Remarks properly applied will yield a plain Anſwer. *Human Nature was the ſame in all Ages*, and the ſame Paſſions and Infirmities attended it. Men differed in their Conſtitution and in their Situation, and various Tempers and Circumſtances worked various Effects in them. Some were as zealous for Martyrdom as He repreſents, but this was not univerſally the Caſe. Some were very properly jealous of their own Strength on ſuch an Occaſion, and with a very ſincere Conviction felt all the Terrors of Nature on the Apprehenſion of a violent Death. Even of the former, thoſe Zealots for Martyrdom, Some were influenced by very different Motives from Others: Some, worn out with Age and Infirmities, and believing a future Immortality, might naturally be deſirous of a Releaſe, as many good Chriſtians are at all Times, who have

no

no Thoughts of the Honour of Martyrdom. Others had their Thoughts ſo intenſely fixed on Heaven and Heavenly Things, that They loſt all Reliſh for this World, and in the Strength of their Contemplations wiſhed for a ſpeedy Tranſlation to Glory. Others, thro' a natural Warmth of Temper, and the ſtrong Impreſſions of an immediate Conviction, ruſhed without farther Thought upon their own Death, provoked their Perſecutors unneceſſarily, and without waiting for a Divine Call, offered themſelves voluntarily to Capital Puniſhments. Theſe latter were diſapproved and cenſured by their wiſer Brethren, who acted on rational Principles; who conſidered the farther Uſe, which Providence might intend them for in this Life, and regarded the Diſpoſal of it as the ſole Prerogative of God. Beſides all theſe, There were many, who were influenced by Fears as well as by Reaſon and Religion; and Some, who were ſo far influenced by them, as to ſuffer this Paſſion to get the better of their Duty, and to be drawn thro' Terror to preſerve their Lives at the Expence of their Conſciences. Others did perſevere but with great Difficulty, and perhaps had not perſevered, if the Recollection of ſome eminent Deliverances had not ſupported their Spirits at that Critical Juncture. Thus were real Believers divided and diſtinguiſhed

in the earlieſt Perſecutions; thus have they been divided in all ſubſequent ones, and as *Human Nature is ever the ſame in all Ages*, thus, it may be expected, will be their various Behaviour on every like Occaſion. We cannot therefore infer that extraordinary Interpoſitions were not of Uſe to *any* of the Believers Themſelves, becauſe they were not ſo to *all*; or that the Timid and Deſponding might not need Encouragement, becauſe the warm and Zealous rather needed Reſtraint. Such partial Accounts can anſwer no Purpoſe but that of Miſrepreſentation; whereas the Truth is, that very different Diſpenſations are profitable to different Tempers and Circumſtances, and Providence in Wiſdom and Mercy has granted ſuch as may ſuitably affect every reaſonable Mind.

It may readily be allowed, that "a whole "Congregation would hardly be induced to "faſt and pray that a departed Friend might "be reſtored, merely to relieve the preſent "Grief, or gratify the fond Affection of par-"ticular Perſons or Families," unleſs there was ſome farther and more important End to be ſerved by the Interpoſition. As one Perſon or Family might be deſirous of this as well as another, and as the Impropriety of thus continuing that Generation by conſtant Miracles, appears on the firſt Mention of it,

therefore

therefore the forementioned Motive *alone* can never be thought a ſufficient Inducement to a Congregation to attempt it. It muſt be preſumed that there was ſome particular Importance in the *Perſon* ſo to be reſtored, or ſome occaſional Importance in the *Seaſon*, as a proper Confirmation of Believers, or Preparative to an approaching State of Perſecution. Something of this Sort is plainly implied in that cautionary Clauſe, on which I obſerved great Streſs is to be laid, that this Miracle was performed *on neceſſary Occaſions*. As to the Injury which Dr. *M.* ſignifies would hereby be done to Thoſe, who were juſt on the Point of entring into Happineſs, and were hereby thrown back into a World of Miſery, it is certain that the ſame Senſe of Piety, which made them deſirous of a Tranſlation, would make them reſigned to the Will of God in the Delay of it; and would enable them to determine, as St. *Paul* did in the *ſame Strait*; that tho' They had *a Deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt, which* for themſelves at preſent would be *far better*, yet knowing that it *would be more needful for the Church, for them to abide in the Fleſh*; They would with Contentment and *Confidence abide and continue with their Brethren for their Furtherance and Joy of Faith*. They knew that the longer they continued in the World,

if

if They improved their Time, and did the more Good in it, the greater would be their Reward in the Concluſion; and even This might make them reſign'd in ſuch their unexpected Reſtoration to Life, on their own Account, beſides the Opportunity hereby given of contributing farther to the Salvation of Others; an ardent Deſire of which was then become, as it were, the natural Temper of Chriſtians.

Dr. *M.* adds, that the Heathens being every where the Majority, "a Chriſtian could "not die or be carried at leaſt to his Grave, "without being obſerved by ſome or other "of his Heathen Neighbours, much leſs "could He be called again into Life, without "aſtoniſhing all thoſe who had ever ſeen "or known Him before, *&c.*" (P. 65.) But it is highly probable that where the Church thought fit to interpoſe in this ſolemn Manner, They did it before the Interment, and therefore if it was intended to be kept from the Knowlege of the Heathens, it was very eaſy to do ſo, and there is no Weight at leaſt in this Conſideration.

His laſt Obſervation on this Point, is, that as much as the Pretence to this Miracle is now diſregarded, if it were fairly offered and really performed, it would invite and convince all Men, and therefore it would have had

had the ſame Effect upon the Heathens heretofore. I am not quite ſatisfied of the Truth either of the Aſſertion or of the Inference. Such a Claim clearly eſtabliſhed would certainly ſatisfy all reaſonable and impartial Men, but all Men are not, nor ever were, reaſonable and impartial. Amidſt the Variety of Mens Diſpoſitions, Some would ſtill think the Claim to be too incredible to deſerve any Attention; Others, tho' they ſaw the Fact, would diſallow the Miracle, thro' the Suppoſition of Confederacy, or ſome ſuch Evaſions; and Others who could not tell how to evade it, would ſtill diſown their Conviction; whilſt candid and unprejudiced Minds only would perceive and confeſs the Truth. This always has been the Caſe, where Miracles have been offered, and therefore *Human Nature being ever the ſame in all Ages*, We may ſafely conclude, that this would be the Caſe again in the ſame Situation. For Inſtance, in this particular Article of *raiſing the Dead*, the Chief Prieſts, who knew that *Jeſus* had raiſed *Lazarus*, inſtead of acknowledging this Evidence of his Divine Power and Authority, turned their Reſentment as well againſt the Perſon *on* whom, as on Him *by* whom the Miracle was wrought, and *conſulted that they might put Lazarus alſo to Death*, John xii. 10. He, it may be preſumed, followed the Example of

his

his Benefactor, and declined giving them the Opportunity of accompliſhing their Schemes, which Dr. *M.* who knew how much greater Impreſſion Words will ſometimes make than Arguments, was pleaſed in a parallel Caſe to call, *ſkulking perpetually, and hiding themſelves among a few Friends.* (P. 65.) Again, theſe chief Prieſts, when they had received the Account of the Reſurrection of *Jeſus* Himſelf, from unqueſtionable Authority, yet inſtead of reſolving to act now according to their Convictions, they reſolved rather to ſtifle and evade them, and hired the Witneſſes themſelves to do the ſame. Theſe are plain Proofs, that Men are not always governed and guided by the Force of Evidence, but have more Power over their own Faith and Conduct than they are here repreſented to have. Dr. *M.* may be ſaid to *deſert the Path of Nature and Experience* in ſuppoſing that All Men will attend and be perſwaded, and own their Perſwaſion, becauſe the Evidence is ſuch, that They ought to do all this; and He as expreſſly contradicts the Hiſtory of the Bible in arguing againſt the Truth of Miracles, becauſe they did not convince All who ſaw, or might have ſeen them.

After all, Dr. *M.* was forced to aggravate and miſrepreſent the Reflection offered, before He could make Room for his own

ready

ready Talent of Ridicule. I may reaſonably demand what Repreſentation I had given of this Matter, "which ſhould tend to per-"ſwade Men, that if the Heathens had been "invited to ſee the Miracle performed in their "Preſence, they would have knocked the "Man down, as ſoon as He began to riſe, "and ſmothered Him again in his Grave, "before He was got out of it." (P. 60, 61.) With what Truth or Juſtice could He charge theſe Doctors with ſaying on this Occaſion, that the Production of a Perſon raiſed from the Dead, would have *expoſed Him only to Perſecution*, or, *to have been knocked on the Head upon the Spot?* (P. 72.) Theſe laſt Words He has put in *Italicks* as the Words of the Doctors; but They are both injured in this Account. Dr. *Church* offered no Reflection of this Kind, and the Whole that I ſaid was that the Recording Inſtances of Perſons thus raiſed would (in *ſome* Caſes probably, for I did not ſay, nor could be ſuppoſed to mean, *in all)* have been drawing down unneceſſarily Perſecution upon thoſe particular Perſons. In this I am ſufficiently juſtified by the fore-mentioned Inſtance of *Lazarus*, which I had then in View, and a very ſlender Foundation does this afford for all this Torrent of Ridicule.

The

The Argument on this Subject, as it ſtands between *Theophilus* and *Autolycus*, is next taken into Conſideration. And here Dr. *M.* has thought fit again to indulge the abuſive Strain, and to proceed in a Style, which I will not imitate. I had obſerved, that the plain Meaning of *Autolycus*'s Demand was to deſire that He might be an *Eye-Witneſs* to ſuch an extraordinary Event, and that *Theophilus* anſwers clearly to this Senſe of his Demand. I had tranſlated the Words referred to in this Manner *. *Farther you deny the Reſurrection of the Dead. For You ſay, ſhew me even one raiſed from the Dead, on the Sight of which I will believe.* Dr. *M.* ſays, they ſhould be rendered thus: *But farther, You deny that the Dead are now raiſed; for You ſay, ſhew me but One, who has been raiſed from the Dead, and by ſeeing Him I will become a Believer.* Now on the Compariſon of theſe Tranſlations an *Engliſh* Reader would certainly have imagined, that I had been guilty of a faulty Omiſſion, and had left out ſome Word which was very material, and which being rendred *now*, or at *this Time*, would have been deciſive on the firſt Queſtion. But this is an Inſertion of the Dr's own, which there

* Ἀλλὰ χὴ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι σε νεκρους ἐγείρεσθαι· Φῆς γὰρ, δεῖξόν μοι κὰν ἕνα ἐγερθέντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἵνα ἰδὼν πιστεύσω·

is

is no Word in the Original to Anſwer. To juſtify the Inſertion of it however, He obſerves that "Every School-Boy would rea-"dily tell us, that νεκρὺς ἐγείρεσθαι denotes an "Action of the preſent Time." Moſt certainly, but Thoſe of more Knowlege ſhould farther conſider the Nature of the Thing ſpoken of, the cuſtomary Uſe of the Phraſe, particularly by the ſame Writer, and the Manner in which it is introduced. Dr. *M.* thought proper to confirm his Senſe of it from a Paſſage in the New Teſtament, *Mat.* xi 5. where the ſame Form of Expreſſion is uſed by our Lord to betoken the Miracles of that Sort, which he was then working. I muſt beg Leave to add, that the ſame Form of Expreſſion is likewiſe uſed by the ſame Divine Author, not concerning the miraculous Gift given at that Time, but concerning the future Reſurrection of all Mankind. ὅτι δὲ ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροὶ, καὶ Μωσῆς ἐμήνυσεν ἐπὶ τῆς βάτου, ὡς λέγει Κύριον τὸν Θεὸν Ἀβραὰμ, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν Ἰσαὰκ, καὶ τὸν Θεὸν Ἰακώβ. Θεὸς δὲ οὐκ ἔστι νεκρῶν, ἀλλὰ ζώντων, πάντες γὰρ αὐτῷ ζῶσιν. *Now that the Dead are raiſed, even Moſes ſhewed at the Buſh, when he calleth the Lord, the God of Abraham, and the God of Iſaac, and the God of Jacob. For he is not a God of the Dead, but of the Living, for All live unto Him,* Luke xx. 37, 38. Here both the Context

Context and the Nature of the Argument uſed ſhew unqueſtionably that he ſpoke of the future Reſurrection of the whole Species, yet He uſes the ſame Phraſe that he did in the other Caſe, and has here that very Word, which as Dr. *M.* ſays, and every School knows, indicates a preſent Senſe. Again, ſays the ſame divine Author. ὥσπερ ὁ Πατὴρ ἐγείρει τοὺς νεκρούς, *John* v. 25. St. *Paul* follows his Maſter's Example. Τί ἄπιστον κρίνεται παρ' ὑμῖν εἰ ὁ Θεὸς νεκροὺς ἐγείρει, *Acts* xxvi. 8. and elſewhere within a few Verſes He uſes this preſent Tenſe three Times, tho' he is clearly and profeſſedly treating of the future Reſurrection at the End of the World, 1 Cor. xv. 29, &c. The laſt of theſe Verſes is the moſt remarkable, and therefore I will cite it at length. Ἀλλ' ἐρεῖτις πῶς ἐγείρονται οἱ νεκροὶ, καὶ ποίῳ σώματι ἔρχονται; *But ſome Man will ſay, How are the Dead raiſed, and with what Body do they come?* This could not be ſpoken of thoſe, who were reſtored to the ſame mortal Condition in this Life, but of thoſe who were to be raiſed again with glorified Bodies hereafter. The Apoſtle goes on in the ſame Style to ſpeak of the great Difference which ſhall then paſs on this mortal Part of Us, uſing ſtill the preſent Tenſe, but moſt certainly intending to be underſtood in the future. Σπείρεται ἐν φθορᾷ, ἐγείρεται ἐν ἀφθαρσίᾳ,

ἀφθαρσία, &c. *It is ſown in corruption, it is raiſed in Incorruption*, &c. v. 42, &c. It will be allowed, I ſuppoſe, that St. *Paul* was not ſpeaking of what was then doing, but of the Alteration that there would be in this Part of our Compoſition at the Day of Judgment. Whether We can account for this Manner of ſpeaking or not, it is plain that it was uſed on this particular Subject; and tho' a School-Boy may know the preſent Tenſe of a Verb, He may not know enough to aſſign the Reaſon why it was uſed, where it can have no other than a future Signification. Some particular Reaſons might, I think, have been aſſigned for this Manner of ſpeaking upon this very Article, if it had been peculiar to it; but it is ſo frequent upon many different Subjects, that there is no Neceſſity of juſtifying it by any diſtinguiſhing Conſiderations. It is common in the New Teſtament in many Inſtances to uſe the preſent for the future.—ἄυριον γὰρ ἀποθνήσκομεν occurs in this very Chapter, v. 32. (For farther Satisfaction ſee Glaſſius Grammat. Sacr. Lib. III. Tract. III. Can. 47. §. 2.)

It is ſtill farther to the Purpoſe, that *Theophilus* Himſelf, in the former Part of this very Book, uſes the ſame Expreſſion in the ſame Senſe, and where it cannot poſſibly admit of any other. He tells *Autolycus*, He

will then underſtand theſe Things, when He ſhall come to experience them; when He ſhall have laid aſide his mortal Body, and ſhall have put on Immortality *. *For God raiſes your Body immortal together with your Soul.*

Theophilus goes on in Words and Reaſonings which cannot be miſunderſtood, and which confine his Meaning to the great Time and Scene of Retribution. Tho' He had uſed this Verb in the preſent Tenſe after the fore-mentioned Pattern, yet He uſes others in the future, on Purpoſe as it were to aſcertain his Meaning †. *And then, if You now believe in Him, being made immortal Yourſelf, You will ſee Him that is immortal, and then You will be ſenſible how impious was that which You have ſpoken againſt Him.* And then follows a Sentence which is quite deciſive upon the Point in Queſtion, and ſhews indiſputably in what Senſe He charged Him with denying the Reſurrection. He uſes here the very ſame Words as He does afterwards in the Paſſage which occaſioned theſe Reflections. Ἀλλὰ ἀπιστεῖς νεκρὸν ἐγείρεσθαι, ὅτε ἔσται, τότε πιστεύσεις θέλων καὶ

* Ἀνεγείρει γάρ σε τὴν σάρκα ἀθάνατον σὺν τῇ ψυχῇ ὁ Θεός. (Lib. I. P. 22. Edit. Oxon.)

† Καὶ τότε ὄψει γενόμενον ἀθάνατον τὸν ἀθάνατον, ἐὰν νῦν πιστεύσῃς αὐτῷ, καὶ τότε ἐπιγνώσῃ ὅτι δεινῶς κατελάλησας αὐτοῦ.

μὴν

μὴ θέλων. *But You do not believe that the Dead are raiſed; when it ſhall be, then You ſhall believe, whether You will or no.* Here the Meaning certainly was not doubtful, but the Whole Paſſage relates very evidently to the Reſurrection of Mankind to Judgment. After ſome few Pages He reſumes the Subject, and returns to the Mention of *Autolycus*'s Denial of this Article, repeating the ſame Expreſſion. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι σε νεκρὺς ἐγείρεσθαι. *Farther, You deny that the Dead are raiſed.* Now if He meant here a Thing quite different from what He meant when he uſed the ſame Words before, could He have avoided altering or adding ſome Word which might have given a Hint of the Deſign? If inſtead of ſpeaking of the general Reſurrection, which it muſt be confeſſed He had ſpoken of in theſe very Terms in the preceding Part of the Diſcourſe, He meant now to ſpeak of the miraculous Power of raiſing the Dead as then continuing in the Church, would He not have ſpecified the Diſtinction, and taken ſome Notice that He now referred not to the Doctrine of a Reſurrection to Immortality with Reſpect to all Mankind, but of a Return from Death again to this Life, by Virtue of a ſupernatural Endowment? There is not a Word, nor a Hint to this Purpoſe throughout this whole Book, but there is very plain Evi-

dence from *Theophilus*'s Anſwer, that whatever was the Method in which *Autolycus* required Satisfaction, yet the Deſign was to eſtabliſh Him in the Belief of the general Reſurrection, which at preſent He denied. For after *Theophilus* had reminded Him of the greater Incredibility of ſome Articles in the Pagan Theology, and referred Him to ſome of the Works of Nature and Providence, which might ſhew the Poſſibility and Probability of this Doctrine, He adds expreſſly in the Concluſion of this Paragraph *. *Now all theſe Things worketh the Wiſdom of God in order to ſhew even by theſe that He has Power ſufficient to effect the general Reſurrection of all Men.* If *Theophilus* be ſuppoſed Himſelf to underſtand *Autolycus*, and to have written to the Purpoſe for his Satisfaction, This again will be deciſive as to the Particular which He is here repreſented as denying; and Dr. *M.* will be found Himſelf to *have quite reverſed the Matter*, as He phraſes it, when He rejects with ſo much Scorn and Contempt, the Suppoſition, that *the general Reſurrection* was the ſole Point here referred to.

* Ταῦτα δὲ πάντα ἐνεργεῖ ἡ τοῦ θεοῦ σοφία, εἰς τὸ ἐπιδεῖξαι καὶ διὰ τούτων, ὅτι δυνατός ἐστιν ὁ Θεὸς ποιῆσαι τὴν καθολικὴν ἀνάστασιν ἁπάντων ἀνθρώπων.

The

The Review of theſe Paſſages together in *Theophilus*, may clear another Point in Diſpute. Dr. *M.* had aſſerted that *Autolycus* offered to turn Chriſtian on ſeeing one Perſon raiſed from the Dead. I obſerved that this was more than the Original warranted Him to ſay; that *Autolycus* was ſpeaking only of that one Point of the Reſurrection, which at preſent He denied, but owned He would believe, if He could ſee an Inſtance of it. Dr. *M.* replies that "the Words themſelves are "expreſs, ἵνα ἰδὼν πιστεύσω," which he has tranſlated, *and by ſeeing Him I will become a Believer*, and is pleaſed to add that they "can-"not poſſibly be interpreted to any other "Senſe." (P. 71.) This is a ſtrong Aſſertion indeed, but is nothing more. To make Uſe of a Diſtinction, which He knew how to apply when it would ſerve a Turn, the Word *in its native and proper Senſe*, means to *give Credit*, or *Aſſent*, and may be applied to Perſons, or Doctrines, or Facts, according to the Occaſion on which it is introduced. Dr. *M.* adds that "We find the ſame Verb "πιστεύω, continually applied in the New "Teſtament, in the ſame Manner, to denote "a Man's becoming a Believer, not of this "or that particular Point, but of the whole "Faith of Chriſt." There are many Inſtances in the New Teſtament, where this

Word is uſed in its native and proper Senſe to ſignify the Aſſent given to the Article ſpoken of, not including the whole Faith of Chriſt, and ſometimes not relating to any Part of it. As the Goſpels treat chiefly of the Hiſtory of Chriſt, and the Epiſtles of his Religion, of Courſe this Word, where it is introduced, does generally mean a Believer on his Perſon or Doctrine, and in the Paſſages referred to by Dr. *M.* the Context ſhews that it muſt be ſo underſtood: But the Force of the Obſervation now offered is, that it does not *neceſſarily* ſignify ſo, that its Senſe muſt depend on its Connection, that Believers may be ſpoken of with Reſpect to other Points than the Religion of Jeſus, and that they are ſo ſpoken of in the Uſe of this Verb or its Participle in ſeveral Parts of the New Teſtament. St. *Paul* applies it to the Belief of the Being and Providence of God, *Heb.* xi. 6. πιστεῦσαι γὰρ δεῖ τὸν προσερχόμενον τῷ θεῷ, ὅτι ἐστι. St. *Jude* to the Acknowledgment of, and Obedience to the Diſpenſation of *Moſes*, v. 5. ὅτι ὁ Κύριος λαὸν ἐκ γῆς Αἰγύπτου σώσας τὸ δεύτερον τοὺς μὴ πιστεύσαντας ἀπώλεσεν. And St. *James* to the Apprehenſions which the Devils themſelves have of their Maker. *Jam.* ii. 19. καὶ τὰ δαιμόνια πιστεύουσι καὶ φρίσσουσι·

φρόνησον The Word therefore is by no Means equivalent to that of *turning Chriſtian*, and implies no more than the Belief and Acknowledgment of that Point, whatever it was, that is brought into Queſtion. In this Senſe it was evidently uſed in the forecited Paſſage of *Theophilus*, Ἀλλὰ ἀπιστεῖς νεκρὺς ἐγείρεσθαι, ὅτε ἔσται, τότε πιστεύσεις θέλων καὶ μὴ θέλων. Here the Belief in the latter Part plainly relates to the ſame Point as the Diſbelief in the former; and He did not mean that the Other would *turn Chriſtian* at the Day of Judgment, but that He would then be fatally convinced of what he would not admit before, the Certainty of a general Reſurrection.

Again, in the other principal Paſſage under View. Ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀρνεῖσθαι σε νεκρὺς ἐγείρεσθαι· φῆς γάρ, δεῖζόν μοι κἄν ἕνα ἐγερθέντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἵνα ἰδὼν, πιστεύσω. Here what He would believe upon this Evidence was plainly that which He denied before, that is, that the Dead could be raiſed, but there is not any thing ſaid or intimated, that he would extend his Faith beyond that ſingle Article, and the Anſwer immediately made to his Propoſal plainly implies that he would not. *Theophilus* replies, "What great Thing is it, if you do believe what you ſee yourſelf?"

Which could not have been applicable to Him if he had offered to turn Chriſtian on the Sight of one ſuch Miracle. This Remark was offered before on this Subject, but Dr. *M.* thought fit to leave it, amongſt many others, unanſwered.

The next Queſtion is, in what Method *Autolycus* demanded Satisfaction. Dr. *M.* ſaid in his Free Inquiry, that He "challenged "*Theophilus* to ſhew Him but one Perſon "that had been raiſed from the Dead, on "Condition of turning Chriſtian Himſelf "upon it." I obſerved from the Character of *Autolycus*, and his Method of objecting, and the Anſwer given to Him, that this was not the Senſe of his Demand; but that He certainly deſired to be Eye-Witneſs to ſuch an Event. — But before We go on to re-examine the Circumſtances, I muſt obviate an Objection thrown in the Way as inſuperable, from the Tenſe in which the Participle is uſed. Dr. *M.* ſays, Every School-Boy would readily tell us that ἐγερθέντα denotes an Action of the Time that is paſt, and He is pleaſed to add Himſelf, that "it could not poſſibly "mean any Thing elſe, in its proper and "grammatical Senſe, but a Perſon, who had "*already been raiſed from the Dead.*" (P. 70.) But here the School-Boy might reply, and as readily tell the Dr. that he had miſta-

ken

ken the *Aoriſt* for the *Preterperfect* Tenſe, and the Authority would be very ſuitable to the Perſon arguing, and very pertinent to the Occaſion, if he ſhould appeal to Dr. *Buſby* to decide this Queſtion. Indefinita ſunt Tempora incertæ Significationis, ſumuntur enim pro Præteritis omnibus, interdum pro Præſenti & Futuro. (Buſb. Gr. Gramm.) The very Name of this Tenſe contradicts the Dr's. peremptory Aſſertion. It is therefore called the *Aoriſt* or *Indefinite*, becauſe 'tis thus uſed promiſcuouſly. The Participle very commonly denotes an Action future with Regard to the preſent Time, but paſt with Regard to ſome ſubſequent Action. Thus *Luke* xi. 8.—ἐγερθεὶς δώσει αὐτῷ ὅσων χρῄζει·—The Riſing was future with Regard to the Entreaty aforementioned, but previous to the Giving. And thus it may be in the Words before Us—δεῖξον εγερθέντα—the Reſurrection might be future with Regard to *Autolycus*'s Demand, tho' previous to the Shewing. There is not the leaſt Weight therefore in this Grammatical Objection, ſo pompouſly urged, but the Words are capable at leaſt of the Senſe which I have put upon them.

I may go on to add that on Suppoſition, that the Demand really bore that Meaning, in which I have interpreted it, it was more properly

properly expreſſed in this Manner than it could have been in any other. *Autolycus* muſt otherwiſe have uſed a long Periphraſis, or have left ſome Part of his Meaning unexpreſſed. Had He ſaid, Shew me One Riſing from the Dead, He had not ſaid all that He meant to demand. He certainly meant to ſee and converſe with this Perſon again after He had been raiſed, as well as to be Witneſs to the Act itſelf of his Riſing. If he knew any thing of the Belief of Chriſtians, He knew that their Maſter had converſed 40 Days with his Diſciples after his Reſurrection, and He might well conſider this as neceſſary to confirm the Reality of the other. Had a Perſon been raiſed for his Satisfaction, who had aſcended immediately from the Grave to Heaven, and had appeared no more, this Fact would have admitted of many Evaſions, which an After-Converſation would Exclude; and as the Demand came from *Autolycus* Himſelf, We may be ſure that he would deſire the Evidence ſo circumſtanced as would be moſt ſatisfactory to Him; I make no Doubt therefore but He required to ſee this Perſon again *after* He was raiſed, as well as *when* he was raiſed, and this indeed I think appears from the Anſwer. And if both theſe Articles were included in his Demand, then, as the whole

Scene

Scene was future, when He required this Method of Satisfaction, and was to be paſt before He could receive Conviction from it, his Challenge might very well be ſo expreſſed, or at leaſt might properly be ſo abridged by Him who repeated the Subſtance, and knew the Meaning of it, φὴς γὰρ, δεῖξόν μοι κἂν ἕνα ἐγερθέντα, &c.

That the Expreſſion may admit of this Meaning, is all that has hitherto been argued; that it was really intended in this Senſe, that *Autolycus* deſired to ſee a Perſon raiſed in his Preſence, appears, I think, from the Circumſtances of the Caſe. If He only deſired to ſee a Perſon that had formerly been raiſed, then He muſt have relied on the Teſtimony of *Theophilus*, or other Witneſſes, concerning the main Point, that of the Miracle itſelf, that the Perſon now produced to Him, was really raiſed from the Dead ſometime before. Had this been the Caſe, He might as well have given Credit to their general Claim of Miracles, for if He thought them Impoſtors, their bringing forth a Man to his View, and ſaying that That was He, who had formerly been raiſed, could by no Means add to the Evidence. The whole Weight of that muſt, in ſuch an Inſtance, reſt on the Credibility of the Witneſſes, but it is plain from the whole Courſe of the

Argument,

Argument, that *Autolycus* denied the Poſſibility of a Reſurrection in itſelf, and declared that Nothing but plain Matter of Fact ſhould convince Him of the contrary. He lays the whole Streſs on the Neceſſity of Ocular Demonſtration in the Caſe. ἵνα ἰδὼν, πιστεύσω. But how was this applicable, if He was only to ſee the Perſon, and be told that that was the ſame who ſometime ago was reſtored to Life? In this Caſe He ſaw nothing of the Miracle, nor had any thing more than the Report of Others to ground his Belief of it upon. His Sight, which only He reſolved to truſt, was of no Weight at all on this Suppoſition, for They might as well deceive Him in the Identity of the Perſon, as in any other Circumſtance of the Account. But the Anſwer given by *Theophilus* plainly implies, that He inſiſted on ſeeing the Miracle itſelf, and would allow no other Evidence as ſufficient. For He replies, πρῶτον μὲν, τί μέγα, εἰ θεασάμενος τὸ γεγονὸς πιστεύεις; He tells Him it was no Sort of Wonder, if He believed a Fact done before his Face. This could by no Means have been applicable to the Caſe of *Autolycus*, if He had deſired no more than to ſee the Perſon, and would have believed the Account of his Reſurrecton upon Report; but it was a very proper Reproof to One, who inſiſted upon Ocular Demonſtration

tion

tion for every Thing, and declared that He would believe no farther than He could ſee. This anſwers to the Interpretation which I have given of his Demand, and to no other, and evidently proves, that He required the Sight of the Miracle itſelf for his Conviction.

Dr. *M.* adds, "that *Autolycus*'s Demand "wholly relates to a Perſon, who *had been* "*actually raiſed*, is proved beyond all Doubt, "by *Theophilus*'s Anſwer to it, as it ſtands "tranſlated by Myſelf, *for if I ſhould ſhew* "*You one raiſed from the Dead, and ſtill living,* "*even this You would diſbelieve:*" Here I ſuppoſe He thought to gain an Advantage by the Tranſlation of *ſtill living*, as if the Perſon had been raiſed heretofore, and was then living when *Theophilus* ſpoke; whereas We are to conſider the whole Tranſaction, if it had been done at all, as ſubſequent to the Demand: *Theophilus* tells Him, that if He ſhould comply with this Demand, if He ſhould ſhew Him a Perſon actually raiſed, and not diſappearing after his Reſurrection, but ſtill living amongſt them, even this would fail of the ſuppoſed Effect, and would not prove convincing to *Autolycus*. Now this Anſwer, for ought I ſee, correſponds as well with my Interpretation of the Demand as with any other. For why was not this Re-

ply

ply as proper, on Suppoſition that *Autolycus* deſired to ſee the Perſon raiſed in his Preſence, and, to prevent Deceit, to ſee Him again afterwards, as if He had only deſired to ſee One that had been raiſed formerly? Every One that believes the Hiſtory of the Bible, knows that there have been Perſons who have reſiſted the Evidence of Miracles wrought in their own Preſence, and *Theophilus* probably knew more ſuch Inſtances, and had Reaſon enough from his Acquaintance with *Autolycus*, to judge that He was a Perſon of that Character, on whom even this Kind of Evidence would be loſt. He ſays indeed, at firſt, that it would be no great Matter, if He ſhould believe what He ſaw with his own Eyes; but He goes on to add, what Every Believer knows to be true, that even Ocular Demonſtration is not irreſiſtible, but that hardened Infidels might contrive to evade the Force of it. They might either diſtinguiſh away the Reality of the Miracle, or diſown the Conviction that it wrought in them, as in ſome Inſtances before referred to. Now either of theſe might very properly be called *Unbelief*, and the One or the Other *Theophilus* foreſaw, and ventured to foretell would be the Caſe with *Autolycus*, if He ſhould give Him that very Evidence that He demanded.

The

" The ſame appears ſtill farther from the whole Diſcourſe of *Theophilus*, from the Character in which *Autolycus* is there drawn, and the Nature of the Evidence which He is repreſented as demanding in other Inſtances. Dr. *M.* indeed, to ſerve a preſent Purpoſe, as He is apt to remark upon Others, has drawn a very fair and promiſing Character of *Autolycus*. He ſays, " From his Familiarity " and Friendſhip with this eminent Biſhop, " We may juſtly infer, that He was of a " candid, reaſonable and inquiſitive Diſpo- " ſition, a Contemner of the Idolatry and Su- " perſtition of the Publick Religion, and de- " ſirous to embrace a more rational Worſhip, " if He could any where find it. In theſe " Circumſtances Chriſtianity was propoſed " to Him, to which He ſeems to have been " inclined, but the Miraculous Pretenſions " of the Chriſtians appear to have ſhocked " Him, and infuſed certain Scruples, which " were firſt to be removed. He could not " believe that They had the Power, of which " They boaſted, of *raiſing the Dead*; or that " there were any Perſons then living among " them, who had been ſo raiſed: This was " the Point, in which He required to be ſa- " tisfied; and if *Theophilus* would ſhew him " an Inſtance of any ſuch Perſon, ſo as to " convince Him of the Reality of the Fact,

" He

"He promiſed to turn Chriſtian upon it." (P. 71.) This is Dr. *M*'s favourable Repreſentation of *Autolycus*, which is not only without any the leaſt Foundation, but contrary in every Particular to the Account given of Him by *Theophilus*. This eminent Biſhop repreſents Him as a bigotted Heathen, as One that worſhipped the groſſeſt Idols, but could go no farther than the Objects of his Senſes, not even ſo far as to acknowledge an inviſible God. He repreſents Him as ridiculing and abhoring the very Name of a Chriſtian, as ſuppoſing that Faith unworthy of any Conſideration, as confining all his Belief to the Evidence of his Senſes, and requiring that Evidence particularly in both the Articles of a ſpiritual Creator, and of the Reſurrection of the Human Species. The very Reverſe of this Character Dr. *M*. has ſupplied from his own Imagination, without Authority, and againſt Reaſon, and deſcribes Him as candid, reaſonable, and inclining to Chriſtianity, when his Correſpondent treats Him as furious, prejudiced, unreaſonable, averſe to the Evidence, the Doctrine, the very Title of this Religion.

Let us firſt obſerve what Proofs there are of his Inclination to Chriſtianity. *Theophilus* charges him with making the very Name a Jeſt, and converting it into a criminal Imputation.

tion. Ἔτι δὲ φής με, καὶ χριστιανὸν ὡς κακὸν, τὸ ὄνομα φορῦντα· (P. 2.) And again, Περὶ δὲ τῦ σὲ καταγελᾶν μὲ, κἀλεῦντα με χριστιανὸν, οὐκ οἶδας ὁ λέγεις. (P. 33.) He next reproves Him as a direct Blaſphemer, and tells Him that He ſhall hereafter, at the general Reſurrection, be ſenſible of this his Prophaneneſs and Impiety. Τότε ἐπιγνώσῃ ὅτι ἀδίκως κατα-λάλησας ἀυτῦ· (P. 22.) He repreſents this *candid and reaſonable Inquirer* as demanding occular Demonſtration for the being of a God, as deſiring to have the Deity exhibited to his View. δεῖξόν μοι τὸν Θεὸν σε· (P. 5.) And He draws up the Anſwer ſo as to confine the Demand to this Senſe. He bids Him open the Eyes of his Mind and the Ears of his Heart, for that as worldly Objects were diſcernible by the Bodily Eyes, ſo by mental ones only could the Viſion of God be attained *. He deſcribes him not as ſatisfied with this Anſwer, but as going on ſtill to deſire to have the *Form of God* deſcribed to Him †. *Theophilus* goes on to tell Him

* Ἐπεὶ δεῖξον ἐλέποντας τὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῆς ψυχῆς σε, καὶ τὰ ὦτα τῆς καρδίας σε ἀκύοντα· ὥσπερ γὰρ οἱ ἐλέποντες τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς τῦ σώματος καταναῦσι τὴν τῦ ζῆν καὶ ἐπίγειον πραγματείαν, —ἕτως ἔχοι ἂν καὶ περὶ τὰ ὦτα τῆς καρδίας, καὶ τὺς ὀφθαλμὺς τὺς τῆς ψυχῆς, δυνάδαι θεὸν θεάσαδαι. (P. 5, 6.)

† Ἐρεῖς ἂν μοι· Σὺ ὁ ἐλέπων, δήγησαί μοι τὸ εἶδος τῦ Θεῦ. (P. 9.)

 again,

again, that the *Form of God* was ineffable and inexplicable, and could not be ſeen with the Eyes of Fleſh *. He likewiſe points out out to Him the Reaſon, why he entertained ſuch abſurd and unworthy Thoughts of the Deity. He tells Him that this Way of thinking was both the natural and judicial Effect of a depraved Mind and a wicked Life. Ἴσως δὲ ἔτι αὐτὸς σὺ ἄχρης ὢν τῷ Θεῷ περὶ τῦ Θεῦ ἕτω φρονεῖς. (P. 5.) And again more expreſſly. ἕτω καὶ σὺ, ὦ ἄνθρωπε, ἔχεις ὑπο-κεκυμένυς τὰς ὀφθαλμὰς τῆς ψυχῆς συ ὑπὸ τῶν ἁμαρτημάτων καὶ τῶν πράξεών συ τῶν πονηρῶν. (P. 6.) He goes on in the following Paragraph, if not with a poſitive Charge of many heinous Immoralities, yet in ſuch a Manner as to ſhew that He thought He could not clear Himſelf of them, and with an expreſs Declaration in the Concluſion, that his Blindneſs in this Particular was owing to the Influence of his Vices over Him. The Paragraph is ſo much to the Purpoſe, that I will tranſcribe and tranſlate it at length †. "Therefore

* Τὸ μὲν εἶδος τῦ Θεῦ, ἄῤῥητον καὶ ἀνέκφρασον, καὶ μὴ δυνάμενον ὀφθαλμοῖς σαρκίνοις ὁραθῆναι.

† Δεῖξον ἂν καὶ σὺ σεαυτὸν, εἰ οὐκ εἶ μοιχὸς, εἰ οὐκ εἰ πόρνος, εἰ οὐκ εἶ κλέπτης, εἰ οὐκ εἶ ἅρπαξ, εἰ οὐκ εἶ ἀποσεσηπὼς, εἰ οὐκ εἶ ἀσεμνοκοίτης, εἰ οὐκ εἶ ὑβρισὴς, εἰ οὐκ εἶ λοίδορος, εἰ οὐκ εἶ ὀργίλος, εἰ οὐ φθονερὸς, εἰ οὐκ ἀλαζὼν, εἰ οὐκ ὑπερόπτης, εἰ οὐ πλήκτης, εἰ οὐ φιλάργυρος, εἰ οὐ γονεῦσιν ἀπιθὴς, εἰ οὐ τὰ τέκνα συ πωλεῖς. Τοῖς γὰρ ταῦτα πράσσουσιν ὁ Θεὸς οὐκ ἐμφαγίζεται,

" fore Do You now ſhew Yourſelf to me,
" whether You are not an Adulterer, whether
" You are not a Fornicator, whether you are
" not a Thief, a Robber, or a Spoiler;
" whether You are not a Defiler of Yourſelf
" with Mankind, whether You are not abu-
" ſive or a Railer; whether you are not
" Wrathful, Envious, Proud and Arro-
" gant; whether You are not Quarrelſome or
" Covetous, Diſobedient to your Parents, or
" a Trader in the Sale of your own Chil-
" dren. For God does not appear to ſuch as
" commit theſe Things, unleſs They firſt
" cleanſe themſelves from all ſuch Pollution.
" All theſe therefore that cloud your Sight,
" as when a Flux of Humour falls into the
" Eyes that they cannot ſee the Light of the
" Sun. In like Manner, your Impieties, Oh
" Man, have blinded You that You are not
" able to attain to the Sight of the Deity."
Whether he was guilty of all theſe Vices or not, the Application is expreſs that he was Guilty of ſuch of them, as had darkened his Underſtanding to ſuch a Degree, as that He could not diſcern the Deity even in his Ope-

φανίζεται, ἐὰν μὴ πρῶτον ἑαυτὸς καθαρίσωσιν ἀπὸ παντὸς μολυσμοῦ. Καὶ σοὶ ἓν ἅπαντα ἐπισκοτεῖ, καθάπερ ὕλης ἐκφορὰ ἐπὰν γένηται τοῖς, ὀφθαλμοῖς, πρὸς τὸ μὴ δύνασθαι ἀτενίσαι τὸ φῶς τῦ ἡλίυ: ἔτω καὶ σοι, ὦ ἄνθρωπι, ἐπισκοτῦσιν αἱ ἀνοσιαι πρὸς τὸ μὴ δύνασθαί σε ὁρᾶν τὸν Θεόν

rations. He elſewhere tells Him, that He was under Error in all his Notions of theſe Things. ὥστε κατὰ πάντα πλανᾶσαι, ὦ ἄνθρωπε. (P. 33.)

This was his Opinion plainly delivered of the Perſon that He was arguing with, whom He well knew, and *of whoſe Character We know nothing more*, as Dr. *M.* obſerves, *than what may be collected from the Writings of* Theophilus. (P. 71.) But from thence We may collect the very contrary of thoſe good Qualities with which Dr. *M.* has complimented Him. *Theophilus* treats Him throughout the Whole as one corrupted, prejudiced, and blinded to the laſt Degree, as one confining his Faith to the Objects of Senſe, and his Conduct to the Pleaſures of it. He conſiders and argues with Him from the very Beginning as one that would carry his Belief no farther than *the wonderful Works and beautiful Fabrick of this viſible World, placed continually before his Eyes.* In the Language of the Book of Wiſdom, xiii. 1. He conſiders Him as *vain by Nature*, being *Ignorant of God, that could not out of the Good things that are ſeen, know Him that is, neither by conſidering the Works did acknowlege the Workmaſter.* He repreſents Him as rejecting all Notion of a Spiritual Being, and denying the Poſſibility of the Reſtoration of the Human Body. Theſe two Points *Theophilus*

philus endeavours to eſtabliſh throughout this Book, even from what he did acknowlege, the Reality of the Objects that were before his Eyes. From the Power and Uſe of the Effects, He argues a great intelligent Cauſe, and from ſeveral Revolutions in the known Courſe of Nature, He ſhews both the Poſſibility and Probability of the Reſurrection of Mankind. This was not only a very ſolid Method of Reaſoning in itſelf, but it was particularly proper to be applied to the Perſon that he was reaſoning with, as being founded on the Objects of Senſe, which with Him were the *Source of all Knowlege, and the Teſt of all Truth.* This was a right Way to remove his Prejudices, and to prepare Him for a View of the Evidences of Chriſtianity, of which there is not a Syllable ſaid in this Book. He repeats the Words which the other had uſed to Him, and which plainly ſhew the previous Difficulties that He ſtuck at, *viz.* the Want of any Idea of a Spirit, and the Impoſſibility of the Renovation of a Human Body after its Diſſolution: for the former He demanded ocular Demonſtration, and therefore it is not credible that he could admit of any thing leſs for the latter. Can We imagine that He, who deſired to have the Deity ſhewn to him for his Conviction, would have credited ſo great a Miracle as

that of *raiſing the Dead* merely upon Teſtimony, and would have been ſatisfied with only having a Perſon ſhewn to Him, and being told that He had formerly been raiſed from the Dead? The Nature of the Caſe as well as the Form of the Phraſe may aſſure Us that when He ſaid, δεῖξόν μοι τὸν Θεόν σου, and δεῖξόν μοι κἂν ἕνα ἐγερθέντα ἐκ νεκρῶν, ἵνα ἰδὼν, πιστεύσω, He meant in both Caſes equally to have the Teſtimony of his Senſes for his Satisfaction, to ſee the *Deity* with his own Eyes, and to have a Perſon *raiſed from the Dead* in his own Preſence. *Theophilus*'s Anſwer is alike in both Caſes. He tells Him that he ought to believe the Being and Providence of God, being demonſtrable from his Works, tho' he could not ſee him with his Carnal Eyes, becauſe He was incomprehenſible *. So again He tells Him in the other Inſtance, that He ought to admit the Poſſibility of a future Reſurrection, tho' He did not ſee an immediate Inſtance of it, becauſe God had given other Proof of it in ſeveral ſimilar Revolutions in the Formation and Preſervation of the natural World †.

Now

* ὕτως ἐχοι ἂν καὶ τὸν Θεὸν μὴ δύνασθαι ὁρᾶσθαι ὑπὸ ὀφθαλμῶν ἀνθρωπίνων, διὰ δὲ τῆς προνοίας καὶ τῶν ἔργων αὐτοῦ βλέπεται καὶ νοεῖται· — ὕτω δεῖ νοεῖν εἶναι τὸν Θεὸν κυβερνήτην τῶν ὅλων, εἰ καὶ ὐ θεωρεῖται ὀφθαλμοῖς σαρκίνοις, διὰ τὸ ἀυτὸν ἀχώρητον εἶναι· (P. 13, 14.)

† Ὁ μὲν ὖν Θεός σοι πολλὰ τεκμήρια ἐπιδείκνυσιν εἰς τὸ πιστεύειν ἀυτῷ· Εἰ γὰρ βούλει καταγόησον τὴν τῶν καιρῶν, καὶ

Now We can with no more Reaſon infer, as Dr. *M.* does (P. 75.) from this Anſwer of *Theophilus*, that this Biſhop knew that *there were no ſuch Perſons then in Being* as had been formerly *raiſed from the Dead*, becauſe He did not give Him Satisfaction in the Way that He required, than We can infer that He thought there was no ſuch Being as God, becauſe He could not exhibit Him to View. Whereas in both Caſes He refers Him to the Evidence that He already had in the Courſe and Conſtitution of Nature, which was indeed ſufficient to prove the Certainty of a Supreme intelligent Being, and the Poſſibility and Probability of a future Reſurrection; and which Kind of Evidence ought to be peculiarly convincing to Him.

This Anſwer however is, I think, a clear Proof that *Theophilus* did not underſtand the Demand as Dr. *M.* has interpreted it, in Relation to the Sight of ſome Perſon, who heretofore had been reſtored to Life. If He had, could He have avoided making ſome Reflection on the Unſuitableneſs as well as the Inefficacy of this Method to the Conviction of the Perſon who deſired it? Could He have failed of giving ſome Reaſon, why ſo

καὶ ἡμερῶν καὶ νυκτῶν τελευτὴν, πῶς καὶ αὐτὰ τελευτᾷ καὶ ἀϊδίζεται· Τί δὲ καὶ οὐχὶ ἡ τῶν σπερμάτων καὶ καρπῶν γινομένη ἐξανάστασις, &c.

eaſy a Method was not complied with, if ſuch Perſons were then living; or of aſſigning the true Reaſon, if They were now Dead the Second Time? Could He have omitted to obſerve, that the Spectators of the Facts ſtill ſurvived; and that the Teſtimony of the Miracle was in all Reſpects the ſame, as if the Subjects, on whom it was wrought, were ſtill capable of being produced? Would He not have taken the Advantage of arguing, that This was reducing the Matter to the *Credibility of Witneſſes* at laſt, and that if that was admitted, They might proceed a ſhorter Way to Work, and on this Foundation might eſtabliſh at once the Truth of Chriſtianity itſelf. Inſtead of all this, which might reaſonably have been expected, We find Him anſwering throughout to the Suppoſition of his believing only what He could ſee, telling Him that this was not properly *Belief*; that even this Kind of Evidence was not ſo irreſiſtible as He might imagine; referring Him however to Evidence enough of this Sort in the Courſe and Conſtitution of Nature. Should a Heathen at this Day make the ſame Demand, I know no properer Anſwer that could be given to it; nor could it be inferred from ſuch an Expreſſion, that He thought there was a Claim of thoſe miraculous Powers ſtill ſubſiſting,

much

much leſs that He was ſhocked at it. It does not at all appear, that *Autolycus* knew there was any ſuch Claim in the Church at that Time, but it was natural enough for a hardened Infidel, who would liſten to no Sort of Teſtimony, to ſay, I will not believe the Poſſibility of a Reſurrection, till I ſee an Inſtance of it.

There remains yet one farther clear Teſtimony from this Book itſelf, that *Autolycus* ſpake only of the *general Reſurrection*, and had no Thought at that Time of diſproving hereby any Pretenſions to ſupernatural Endowments. Before I cite the Paſſage I will only obſerve, that *Theophilus* was ſo far from looking on him as "a Contemner of the "Idolatry and Superſtition of the Public "Religion, and deſirous to embrace a more "rational Worſhip, if He could any where "find it," that He reproaches Him with giving in to the Vulgar Idolatry and Superſtition, and being ſo entirely devoted to the Objects of Senſe, as even to miſtake and adore them for Deities. Εἶτα πιστεύεις τὰ ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων γινόμενα ἀγάλματα, θεοὺς εἶναι καὶ ἀρετὰς ποιεῖν· τῷ δὲ ποιήσαντί σε Θεῷ ἀπιστεῖς δύνασθαί σε καὶ μεταξὺ ποιῆσαι; (P. 25.) This ſhews plainly in what Senſe He denied that the Dead could be raiſed, not in Oppoſition merely to any Pretenſions of working ſuch a

Miracle

Miracle at that Time, but from the Nature of the Thing at all Times, which He eſteemed beyond the Power of any Deity that He owned; and *Theophilus*, to confine it to this Senſe, after having referred to proper Emblems and Illuſtrations in the Courſe of Nature, of ſuch a Reſtoration of the Human Species, is ſo ingenuous as to confeſs that He Himſelf formerly did not believe this *future Reſurrection*, but was now brought to this Faith by a ſerious Contemplation of theſe Things which He had mentioned, confirmed likewiſe by farther Evidence, which He goes on to ſpecify. Καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼ ἠπίστουν τοῦτο ἔσεσθαι, ἀλλὰ νῦν κατανοήσας αὐτὰ πιστεύω, &c. (P. 39.)

There remains nothing farther on this Head, for as all Dr. *M*'s Reaſonings are founded on a Suppoſition of *Autolycus*'s demanding the Sight of a Perſon formerly raiſed, they fall of Courſe with the Diſproof of that Point. He has objected indeed to me particularly the Authority of my Father, which would have been of great Weight with me, if the Force of Truth had not been of greater; for which I ſhall hope to ſtand excuſed. Why *Theophilus* might not think fit to work ſuch a Miracle at preſent for his Conviction, according to my Interpretation of the Demand, I have before ſhewn; and ſhall only deſire the Reader to recollect, how wicked

ed a Man, how abſurd a Reaſoner, how groſs an Idolater, *Autolycus* is here repreſented to be by his intimate Acquaintance; and then He will probably think that *Theophilus*'s Judgment was not ill founded, when He ventured to ſay before-hand, that even this Miracle would not certainly convince Him. He will farther ſee, that He took the right Method of arguing with the Perſon that He had to deal with, by beginning to prove from the Courſe of Nature, the Being, the Providence, the Power of God, and thereby leading Him gradually to, and preparing Him properly for the real Evidences of Divine Revelation.

Dr. *M.* had "farther obſerved, that in "the earlier Times alſo, after the Days of "the Apoſtles, there is no Intimation of the "Subſiſtence of this Miracle in the Church, "except in a ſingle Inſtance, found in the "Writings of *Papias*, which *Euſebius*, who "ſlightly touches it, ſeems to rank *among* "*the other fabulous Stories recorded by that* "*Weak Man.*" Several of his Anſwerers juſtly obſerved that this was ſaid without the leaſt Authority, and that *Euſebius* caſt no ſuch Imputation on this Report. Neither the Words uſed concerning it, nor the Manner in which it is introduced, give any Reaſon to think that he eſteemed the Report

port of this Miracle unworthy of Credit. Dr. *M.* now undertakes to ſhew this chiefly from the laſt, from the Paragraph in which the Account is mentioned, of which He has given all thoſe Parts which might ſeem to confirm his Opinion, leaving out, as uſual, thoſe Circumſtances, which may well be interpreted to imply the contrary. *Euſebius* begins with obſerving, that *Papias* was a very diligent Collector of every Thing which He could learn from the Apoſtles, or from thoſe who had converſed with them, and this Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtorian profeſſes that it would be worth while to record ſome of the Miracles, which *Papias* had preſerved by Tradition *. Would He have thought this worth while, if He looked on theſe Miracles as Legends undeſerving of Credit? The Miracles, which He reports, are only two, the One of a Dead Perſon, who had been raiſed to Life; the Other of *Juſtus*, ſurnamed *Barſabas*, who drank a Cup of Deadly Poiſon, and yet by God's Mercy receiv'd no Harm from it. Now if We can form any Reaſon, why He thought theſe in particular worthy to be recorded, it was becauſe they anſwered to ſome Predictions of ſuch Gifts

* ἄξιον δὲ ταῖς ἀποδοθείσαις τῷ Παπίᾳ φωναῖς, προσθεῖναι λέξεις ἑτέρας αὐτοῦ, δι' ὧν παράδοξά τινα ἱστορεῖ καὶ ἄλλα, ὡς ἂν ἐκ παραδόσεως εἰς αὐτὸν ἐληλυθότα.

in

in the Sacred Writings. Our Saviour had given in his Life-Time a Power to raiſe the Dead, and juſt before his Aſcenſion, had foretold that amongſt other ſupernatural Gifts, This ſhould attend his Diſciples, that *if They drank any deadly Thing it ſhould not hurt them.* Of the former Miracle few Inſtances had been recorded, and of the latter not ſo much as one, and therefore *Euſebius* might think it very proper to perpetuate the Memory of theſe; but had He intended only to ſtigmatize ſome fabulous Reports, certainly He would not have ſelected ſuch Inſtances as anſwered exactly to thoſe prophetic Promiſes, leſt He might ſeem to caſt ſome Reflection on the Sacred Writings. Nay, as if He deſigned particularly to confirm the Credibility of theſe Miracles, He comments, as it were, on the Circumſtances, obſerves, that He Himſelf had before made Mention of the Reſidence of *Philip* and his Daughters at *Hierapolis*, from whom this Report came: And He goes on with Reſpect to the latter Miracle to obſerve that it related to the ſame *Juſtus*, ſurnamed *Barſabas*, who is ſpoken of in the *Acts of the Apoſtles* as a joint Candidate with St. *Matthias* for the Apoſtleſhip. Would He have taken ſuch Care to notify and diſtinguiſh this, if He had thought it a fabulous Story, and meant to record his Opi-

nion of it as ſuch?—Well, but He obſerves afterwards, that *Papias* was a weak Man;—He does ſo, but He does not therefore conſider Him as an incompetent Witneſs of Facts, but as an ill Judge of ſome Doctrines. *Euſebius* Himſelf apparently, I think, makes this Diſtinction. In the Beginning of this Chapter He quotes *Papias* as ſaying that He would ſet forth what He had heard from the Ancients, and well remembred, together with his own Interpretations *. Now ſome Facts which He had learnt from Others, and which He could not miſtake the Meaning of, *Euſebius* thought worth while to report from Him, and ſets them down without any Cenſure or Hint of their Incredibility, nay with Circumſtances which imply his own Belief of them; but when He comes to the Notions and Opinions, which *Papias* delivered down by Tradition, and which a Man of no great Underſtanding might eaſily be ſuppoſed to miſapprehend, here the Hiſtorian changes his Style, repreſents his Authority as of very little Weight in the Caſe of ſuch Points, ſpeaks of his Reports and Traditions of this Sort as more like Fables than any Thing elſe, paſſes them over therefore without Notice, except

* ἐκ ὀκνήσω δὲ σοι καὶ ὅσα ποτὲ παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων καλῶς ἔμαθον καὶ καλῶς ἐμνημόνευσα, συγκατατάξαι ταῖς ἑρμηνείαις, &c.

in

in one Specimen, which likewiſe He accounts for, and ſhews how the Miſtake had ariſen *. Now all the Charge which is here brought againſt *Papias*, is, that He had not a Head to ſee thro' the myſtical Senſe of Prophecies, but was apt to interpret every Thing literally; which, however true, was no Prejudice to his Underſtanding, and reporting miraculous Facts, they being certainly to be underſtood literally. Since therefore *Euſebius* applied this Obſervation concerning Him, particularly to *Parables* and *Doctrines*, ſince He reported Miracles from Him without any Appearance of Doubt and Diſtruſt, and brought in this Diſtinction, where it might be expected, in Matters of Speculation and Argument, there is no Appearance of his ranking the Miracle now referred to amongſt other *fabulous* Stories, but there is the ſtrongeſt Preſumption imaginable againſt his doing ſo.

Dr. *M.* returns to the old Objection, that this Miracle ſtands upon the ſingle Teſtimony of *Irenæus*. This Exception would have been of as much Force againſt St. *John*'s Teſtimony in ſome Inſtances, and St. *Paul*'s in others, but is indeed of no Force in any Caſe.

* Καὶ ἄλλα ἢ ὁ αὐτὸς συγγραφεὺς ὡς ἐκ παραδόσεως ἀγράφου εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκοντα παρατίθεται, ξένας τέ τινας παραβολὰς τοῦ σωτῆρος καὶ διδασκαλίας αὐτοῦ, καὶ τινα ἄλλα μυθικώτερα, &c.

If

If the Witneſs be unexceptionable, the Silence of Others cannot diſprove ſuch poſitive Evidence. However there are collateral Circumſtances to ſupport the Credibility of it. This Gift was promiſed and beſtowed at firſt amongſt Others; that Others continued We have the concurrent Teſtimony of all the Primitive Writers, and therefore it may be preſumed that this did not entirely ceaſe during the Continuance of the reſt, unleſs there be ſome poſitive Evidence to the contrary, or unleſs ſome Reaſon can be aſſigned from the Nature of the Thing, why this ſhould be withdrawn ſooner than the others. Now neither of theſe is attempted; ſome Reaſons may be and have been given, why this Miracle might not be ſo frequent, and of Courſe not ſo frequently mentioned as ſome others, but None can be offered, why this, whilſt others were ſtill abounding, ſhould not be performed *on neceſſary Occaſions*, to which *Irenæus* expreſſly limits it. There is not therefore the leaſt Ground to call his Teſtimony in Queſtion as to this Article, if He was Himſelf a competent Witneſs and Judge of ſuch a Miracle.

This Point, it was foreſeen, the Queſtion might be reduced to at laſt, and therefore Dr. *M.* ſays, that " He has ſhewn *Irenæus* to " be of ſo credulous, ſuperſtitious and en-

" thuſiaſtical

" thuſiaſtical a Turn as would diſpoſe Him " to embrace and aſſert any fabulous Tale " which tended, as He thought, in any " Manner to advance the Credit of the Goſ- " pel, or to confute an Heretick;" (P. 81.) He is pleaſed to add, that the Champions on the other Side have not attempted to give any particular Anſwer to his Exceptions of this Sort, and then, after a Compliment to his own Judgment, ventures to pronounce that " there is not a Grain of Truth in *Irenæus*'s " Report, nor a ſingle Circumſtance belong- " ing to it make it probable," (P. 82.) But here He has been Guilty of a groſs Miſtake in Fact, as well as in Judgment, which is more than He could juſtly lay to the Charge of *Irenæus*. His Anſwerers took into Conſideration his Objections to the Character of that Pious and Primitive Father. They All obſerved that a Miſtake in Opinion could not incapacitate a Man for a Witneſs of Fact, and that whether He reaſoned well or not on the Senſe of ancient Writings, He could not but know the Truth of preſent Tranſactions, which are reported as done frequently *on neceſſary Occaſions*, by and before the whole Church. The ſevereſt Cenſurers of the Fathers always made this Diſtinction, and allowed their Teſtimony in Caſes which fell under their own Senſes, tho' they did not

allow their Authority or Capacity in the Way of Argumentation or Judgment. It lay on Dr. *M.* in Reply to this, to ſhew why Errors in Speculation muſt neceſſarily blind a Mans Eyes in Matters of Fact, or why a Man could not judge of a Miracle, eſpecially ſo circumſtanced as this, becauſe perhaps He miſapprehended Points of a very different Nature. This He has not attempted now, nor had He offered any Thing before to prove that *Irenæus* would knowingly embrace and aſſert any fabulous Tale to ſerve a preſent Purpoſe. The only Inſtance in which He expreſſly charged Him with wilful Forgery, in relation to his Report of the *Age of Chriſt*, I took particularly into Conſideration, and ſhewed that there was not the leaſt Ground for ſuch a Charge. I ſhewed that Dr. *M.* had added to, and miſrepreſented his Account; that He might well be underſtood as referring to the general Heads of his Diſcourſe and not to this Particular Point, when He laid Claim to a general Apoſtolical Tradition; and that the Moſt which could be made of it was a Miſinterpretation, eaſy to be accounted for, of a Paſſage of Scripture; and that not originally his, but received by Report, which preſently ſunk upon a proper Examination of it. Dr. *M.* attempts not to renew and vindicate this Charge, but, as

conſcious

conſcious of the Inſufficiency of it, paſſes it over, and favours us only with his own Opinion, without any farther Argument to ſupport it. I ſhall take the Liberty therefore to conclude again, in Oppoſition to Him, that the Miracle in this Caſe was probable, and the Witneſs credible; that when We are aſſured by ſuch concurrent Teſtimony, that other ſupernatural Gifts continued at that Time, 'tis likely at leaſt that This ſhould do ſo too; that *Irenæus* muſt know whether the Church did *on ſuch neceſſary Occaſions* apply in joint Prayer for ſuch a Miracle, and whether they ſucceeded in it; and that He underſtood and practiſed Chriſtianity too well, to have been guilty of a wilful Fraud on any Occaſion; much more on this, in which all the Chriſtian Brethren could ſo eaſily have detected Him.

Here again I cannot avoid the farther Complaint of Miſrepreſentation. Dr. *M.* not only paſſes over what I had ſaid on this Head, but accuſes me of ſaying what I never ſaid. He charges his Adverſaries as affirming with one Voice, that Irenæus's *Teſtimony is ſuperior to all Exception*, and laying it down as an indiſputable Maxim; that *the poſitive Evidence of a Witneſs, ſo pious and ſo ſincerely devoted to the Chriſtian Cauſe, muſt neceſſarily demand our Belief in all Caſes, how extraordinary or incredible ſoever they may*

be in their own Nature. (P. 81.) Theſe Words again are printed in *Italicks*, tho' whence they are taken I know not. None of his Adverſaries have either uſed theſe Expreſſions, or ſpoken to this Purpoſe; or attempted to defend the primitive Fathers by ſo unwiſe and ſo unlimited a Poſition. But it will be eaſy to write *Vindications*, if a Man may take the Liberty of making his Opponents ſay what he pleaſes, as well as of ſaying what he pleaſes againſt them.

Dr. *M.* proceeds to charge his Anſwerers with giving a different Account of the *Gift of Tongues* from all who wrote before them, but has failed as much in the Proof of it, as his *Defender* had done before Him. All former Writers He repreſents as affirming this Gift to have been abſolutely neceſſary to the Propagation of the Goſpel, and without which no Succeſs could be expected: But they do not repreſent it as an *Evidence* to thoſe whom they Taught, of the Truth of what they Taught, nor could it be, unleſs, as in the Caſe of the Apoſtles, They knew their Circumſtances before-hand, and could therefore be ſure that They had not attained this Knowlege and Uſe of various Languages by Human Means. But They all repreſent it as neceſſary to introduce them to the *Converſation* of the Nations and People to be converted, without which their other Miracles

racles could have been of no Avail, and They muſt have ſpent their Time in qualifying themſelves to preach, inſtead of actually preaching to the World. Nor do *theſe Doctors ſpeak in a different Tone*, as he is pleaſed to expreſs it, for They allow this great Uſe of this Gift, as much as Any who wrote before them. But it was obvious to obſerve, that when this Opportunity of converſing with the ſeveral Nations in their reſpective Languages, could be brought about by Human Means, it was not to be expected that Providence ſhould work Miracles unneceſſarily, but that this End being otherwiſe ſupplied in gaining a Method of Intercourſe with thoſe who were to be converted, other Kind of ſupernatural Gifts might better be offered in the Way of *Evidence*, and were therefore more likely to be continued: And it was as obvious to obſerve in the next Place, that this End of gaining Admiſſion into Diſcourſe with them was effectually anſwered by the Converſion of ſome of the Natives, who could ſpeak to their Brethren in their own Language; who, tho' they might ſtand in Need of other Sort of Miracles to convince them, yet could not want this to enable them to talk with them. If therefore We find little Mention of this after the Days of the Apoſtles, or leſs Mention of it,

at leaſt, than of other ſupernatural Gifts, this is juſt what might be expected from the Nature and Reaſon of the Thing. Dr. *M.* however is pleaſed to call this *a mere imaginary Scheme, without the leaſt Foundation in Reaſon, Hiſtory, or Experience.* Its Foundation in Reaſon may be ſeen in what has been already offered. The Hiſtory of the Propagation of the Goſpel and of the Labours of the Apoſtles, inſtead of contradicting, does much confirm it. Had They not made Uſe of the Aſſiſtance of Some of their firſt Converts, and employed them to be their Fellow-Labourers in the Converſion of Others, They could not have made ſuch ſpeedy Advance from Place to Place, nor have ſpread Chriſtianity thro' ſo great a Part of the World in one Age. They did not, They could not bring Miſſionaries enough with them thus endued with the *Gift of Tongues* to ſettle in Each Place where the Goſpel was preached, and to confine to them the Work of the Miniſtry; and Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory aſſures us that they did not: but that this Office was communicated to the Natives of each Place. St. *Clement* tells the *Corinthians*, that the Apoſtles, *preaching through Countries and Cities, appointed the Firſt-Fruits of them, proving them by the Spirit, to be the Biſhops and Miniſters of thoſe who ſhould afterwards*

wards believe *. The imperfect Accounts which remain to Us of the Lives of the firſt Biſhops, and moſt eminent Preachers of Chriſtianity, ſhew the ſame, and indeed in the Nature of the Thing it could not be otherwiſe. Dr. *M.* oppoſes to this, the Difficulty of their gaining a competent Knowlege themſelves ſo as to be able to inſtruct and convert Others. "The Jewiſh Converts, He "thinks, might ſoon become Maſters of the "Myſtery of the Goſpel, and be qualified to "teach it; But to Converts of barbarous Na-"tions and ſtrange Languages, utterly unac-"quainted with every Principle, which bore "any Relation either to Judaiſm or Chriſti-"anity, the Caſe was quite Different, and to "acquire a competent Knowlege of the "Chriſtian Doctrine muſt have been a "Work of much Time and great Difficulty, "ſo as to be hardly attainable at all in any "Degree of Perfection, except to a very few." (P. 87.) I may here return the Obſervation, that *this is an imaginary Scheme, without the leaſt Foundation in Reaſon, Hiſtory, or Experience.* If the *Gentiles* had not the Advantage of the previous Knowlege of the Old Teſtament to lead them to the Belief of the

* Κατὰ χώρας ἐν ᾗ πόλεις κηρύσσοντες, καθίσαμεν τὰς ἀπαρχὰς αὐτῶν, δοκιμάσαντες τῷ πνεύματι, εἰς ἐπισκόπους καὶ διακόνους τῶν μελλόντων πιστεύειν. Epiſt. ad Cor. §. 42.

New, They were likewiſe without thoſe Prejudices, which the *Jews* had contracted from the former, againſt the Belief of any poſſible Alteration of that Diſpenſation, and againſt the Notion of a ſpiritual and *ſuffering Meſſiah*. If thoſe Prophecies were now firſt ſhewn to the Heathens, and the plain Completion of them firſt pointed to in the Hiſtory of our Saviour's Life and Death, his Doctrines and Sufferings, They, not having any Prepoſſeſſion of a different Interpretation, were more likely to diſcern and to admit the Sufficiency of that Evidence, than the *Jews*, who had long been acquainted with thoſe Prophetical Writings, but had always had a different Notion of them. All Reaſonable Men among the Gentiles likewiſe, were more ſenſible of the Expediency and Deſirableneſs of a Revelation at that Time, than Thoſe who were in Poſſeſſion already of one that was of Divine Original, and which they thought to be perpetual and irreverſible. Whatever other Cauſes might contribute to this Effect, from the greater practical Purity or more honeſt Diſpoſition of Mind, amongſt the unenlightened Heathens, yet the Fact is certain, that far the greater Part of the Primitive Converts was taken from amongſt them. They were more eaſily converted and taught the Diſpenſation of *Chriſt*, than

than thoſe who were already attached to the Diſpenſation of *Moſes*. We find this Obſervation made more than once in the Sacred Writings. Thus, Acts xiii. 45, *&c.* when the *Jews were filled with Envy, and ſpake againſt thoſe Things which were ſpoken by* Paul, *contradicting and blaſpheming. Then* Paul *and* Barnabas *waxed bold, and ſaid, it was neceſſary that the Word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken unto You, but ſeeing Ye put it from You, and judge Yourſelves unworthy of everlaſting Life, lo, We turn to the* Gentiles; *for ſo hath the Lord commanded us.* — *And when the* Gentiles *heard this, they were glad, and glorified the Word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed.* So again, St. *Paul*, after having cited and applied a Paſſage of one of their Prophets, in Relation to the Perverſeneſs of the *Jewiſh* Nation, concluded his Reprehenſion of them in theſe Words, *Be it known therefore unto you, that the Salvation of God is ſent unto the* Gentiles, *and that they will hear it.* Acts xxviii. 28. Theſe *Barbarians*, as he calls them, were ſo far from being more dull of Underſtanding and hardened of Heart than the *Jews*, that they were much leſs ſo, and proved more capable of Inſtruction and Conviction, than thoſe Diſciples of *Moſes*.

Again,

Again, the Difficulties which He has here repreſented concerning the Time that muſt be taken up in Learning, by an Argumentative Method, the Nature of God and of Man, of the Mercies granted by the former, and the Duties owing from the latter, are of ſome Weight in the preſent State of Mankind, when ſupernatural Gifts are no longer beſtowed; but were out of the Queſtion, when immediate Miracles teſtified a Divine Commiſſion, and at once gave Authority to all the poſitive Dictates of it. So *Biſhop Burnet*, from whom He borrowed this Reflection and perverted it, ſtates the Caſe, "It is ſo ſublime a Myſtery," ſays he, "to think on God and his Attributes and "Works, or to think of another State and "the Way that leads to it, that till God furniſhes out a new Miſſion of Apoſtles, with "a Meaſure of thoſe extraordinary Gifts, "which were poured out on the great Pentecoſt, it is not eaſy to imagine how the "Converſion of the Heathen Nations ſhould "be made." He thought that the Method of Teaching by mere Reaſoning would be very ſlow, if not totally ineffectual, and that therefore Miracles were wanting to teach and to confirm the Will of God in a more authoritative and compendious Manner. And however true this may be, when applied as

Biſhop

Biſhop Burnet applied it, to the preſent Converſion of the Heathens, yet it could not affect the Apoſtolical Age, when by Dr. *M*'s own Conceſſion, Miraculous Powers were granted and exerted. Theſe proved in a ſhort and convincing Method the Claim of Divine Aſſiſtance in thoſe who came to convert them, and gave a clear and ſtrong Sanction to what They delivered as the Will of God. The *Form of ſound Words*, which They delivered, was neither obſcure nor tedious, and as They carried the written Scriptures with them to each new founded Church, This made the Matter ſtill more eaſy with Reſpect to their Inſtruction. Any Men of plain and common Underſtanding, who ſaw evidently an Interpoſition from Heaven in frequent and undoubted Miracles, who heard the Connection expreſſly declared between thoſe Miracles, and the Doctrines and Precepts delivered, who obſerved the Reaſonableneſs of the Duties enjoined, and the Importance of the Motives by which they were enforced, could not fail of receiving ſufficient Conviction and Knowlege, and if they were but *faithful Men* might ſoon be *able to teach others alſo*. And here I cannot but obſerve, that Dr. *M.* is moſt certainly *ſpeaking in a very different Tone* from what he did at the Beginning of the Vindication. Then the Law of Nature was all-

all-ſufficient, and " from the viſible Fabric " of the World, the Reaſon of Man was in- " abled to trace out the Divine Nature and " Attributes, and by a gradual Deduction of " Conſequences, to learn his own Nature " alſo with all the Duties belonging to it, " which related either to God or his Fellow- " Creatures." (P. 7.) Now the Reaſon of Man was not ſufficient to comprehend even when He was taught; nor could the Poor Heathens, with the Advantage of immediate Revelation, with Signs and Wonders offered to them from Heaven to open their Eyes and Hearts, and with Doctrines and Duties plainly propoſed to them upon this Authority, underſtand enough of it to be entruſted with it, or to teach their yet uninſtructed Brethren. Such different Schemes could this Man, unqueſtionably of great Reaſon Himſelf, fall into, when He had different Views to ſerve by the Repreſentation. He goes on to ſay, that " Experience has evinced the contrary, " and ſhewn that either no ſuch Cuſtom had " ever obtained, or that it was wholly fruit- " leſs and ineffectual from the very Begin- " ning; ſince in all the Barbarous Nations " of the World, no Footſtep has ever been " diſcovered of any Succeſſion of native " Preachers, nor any Remains indeed of " Chriſtianity itſelf, though it is confidently

" affirmed

" affirmed to have been preach'd to them
" all." (P. 87.) May One not well call in Queſtion both the Truth and the Pertinence of this Obſervation? For many Nations, which might well be called *barbarous*, when the Goſpel was firſt preached to them, have ſince much improved in Learning and Morality, and do, God be thanked, to this Day, retain their Chriſtianity. And how does the ſuppoſed Loſs of it in other Nations ſtill continuing *barbarous*, affect the Queſtion, whether the Goſpel was taught them by their own Natives in Conjunction with the firſt Planters of it, or altogether by Foreigners for a conſiderable Time? Some retained the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity for ſome Centuries, and yet their *Candleſtick*, thro' natural and judicial Cauſes, was afterwards taken from them: And ſome Footſteps of Chriſtianity, if We may credit the Miſſionaries, have been found amongſt very remote and unimproved Nations: But whether this be true or falſe, I ſee not how it relates to the Point before Us.

Dr. *M.* adds, that " He has never
" read or heard that any ſuch Method has
" ever been practiſed, or thought to be prac-
" ticable by the Miſſionaries of theſe modern
" Ages, for how great ſoever their Harveſt
" may have been found, yet all the Labour-

" ers

"ers in it have conſtantly been ſupplied "from Time to Time from Chriſtian Coun-"tries." (P. 87, 88.) This again is highly doubtful, and extremely improbable, from the Accounts which I have read of theſe Miſſions; but be it never ſo true, it is Nothing to the preſent Purpoſe. The Queſtion before Us, is, whether whilſt ſome miraculous Powers are allowed to have continued, any Reaſon can be aſſigned, why this *Gift of Tongues* in particular ſhould ceaſe before the Reſt, or be leſs inſiſted on in the frequent Claim of miraculous Endowments: But certainly this Queſtion cannot be determined by any Practice now, when no Miracles at all do really ſubſiſt. The firſt Planters of the Goſpel might uſe this Method of employing the Firſt-Fruits amongſt the Natives to convert Others, tho' the preſent Miſſionaries do not; and They had more and better Reaſons for doing it, and greater Advantages towards making it effectual, by their other miraculous Gifts, than Any can now with Truth and Juſtice pretend to have.

The only remaining Article relates to the Caſe of *Irenæus* Himſelf, whom Dr. *M.* on the Authority of Dr. *Cave*, repreſented as being in great Want Himſelf of the Gift which He ſo liberally aſcribed to Others. Here He was cenſured for adopting the Er-

ror.

tor of a great and good Man, from whom He might have learnt many uſeful and important Truths, without any Attempt, by an Appeal to the Original, to ſhew that his Interpretation was right. He now excuſes Himſelf for taking this Method by ſaying that "his Interpretation would be ſure to be "ſuſpected by all Writers of the ſame Zeal "and Genius with theſe Doctors." (P. 91.) But theſe Doctors did not cenſure Him for quoting Dr. *Cave*, but for not quoting *Irenæus* Himſelf. He was at Liberty to pay as much Deference to Dr. *Cave*'s Authority as He pleaſed, and if He had paid more, He might perhaps have been oftner in the Right. But to omit quoting the Original itſelf in a Point of ſuch Importance, and on which He Himſelf lays ſo much Streſs, was, to ſay the beſt, very groſs Negligence.

Well, the Original is now produced, and Dr. *M.* now maintains that "his Expoſition "of *Irenæus*'s Words has given us the true "Meaning of them, and the only one in-"deed which they will bear." And here I am favoured, as uſual, with the ſevereſt Mark of his Diſpleaſure; and my Tranſlation is cenſured as *flat and inſipid, and carrying no diſtinct Senſe or Idea.* I had rendred καὶ περὶ βάρβαρον διάλεκτον τὸ πλεῖστον ἀσχολουμένων, *and are chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect.*

This

This is the Verſion cenſured. Let Us now examine his Correction of it. He tells Us that "the Word ἀσχολεμένων implies a Lei-"ſure particularly devoted to literary Stu-"dies;" (P. 95.) but He ſhould have told Us at the ſame Time what Authority He had to ſay this; for his Word will not paſs with me for Authority, and I find no other to ſupport it. Indeed it ſeems to imply the direct contrary, and to mean Employment of any other Sort rather than of applying vacant Hours to mental Improvement. For though Dr. *M.* is pleaſed to talk of employing his Leiſure upon this Language, yet the Word plainly ſignifies his Want of Leiſure to im-ploy, thro' his active Engagement upon Buſi-neſs. This the Verb ἀσχολέω according to its known Etymology apparently ſignifies *;

This

* Ἄσχολος Occupatus— Σχολὴ enim ſignificat quod vulgo εὐκαιρεία dicitur. i. e. tempus a negotiis vacuum. Suidas.— Ἀσχολία ἡ πολλὴ περὶ τι ἀπασδὴ, καὶ συνεχὴς ἐπιμέλεια. Phavorin.— Ἀσχολία, ἐνδελεχισμὸς. Heſych.— Ἀσχολέομαι, occupor, non ſumotioſus.— Ἀσχολία, cum quis ita negotium habet, ut vacare non poſſit. Conſtant.— Ἄσχολος cui otium non eſt.— Ἀσκολέω, occupatus ſum, negotiis diſtringor. Scap.— Ἀσχολοῦντας μὲν καὶ πολεμοῦντας φαίνεσθαι ἀγαθοὺς· εἰρήνην δ' ἄγοντας καὶ σχολάζοντας ἀνδραποδώδεις· Ariſtot. ap. Scap.— Ἀσχολέω, occupatus ſum, negotiis diſtringor.— ἀσχολεῖσθαι περὶ τι ſignificat occupari circa aliquid. Steph.— Ἀσχολήμεθα γὰρ ἵνα σχολάζωμεν, verſamur enim in rebus gerendis, ut in otio vivamus. Ariſtot. ap. Steph.— Ἡμῖν γὰρ ἐστι σχολὴ μὲν φιλοσοφεῖν, ἀσχολία δὲ κακυργεῖν· Syneſ. ap. Steph.

Ἀσχολίαν

This the ſeveral Examples given under the Word in Lexicons apparently confirm, and this the Connection in the Paſſage referred to evidently requires. He ſays, *You will not expect any Oratory from Us, who reſide among the* Celtæ, *and are chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect.* Is it not plain that his Reſidence amongſt that People occaſioned this his almoſt conſtant Employment in that Language, that is, by converſing with them, by teaching them in their own Tongue the Truth, the Nature, and the Importance of Chriſtianity. This was the proper Work and Buſineſs of his Miſſion, and this, as He repreſents it, and as in the Nature of the Thing it muſt do, took up much the greateſt Part of his Time and Thoughts, ſo that He had little or no Leiſure for an Application merely to the Study of Words, and Improvement in Rhetorick. His daily Engagement

Ἀσχολίαν δ' φιλοσοφίας ποιοῦμαι. Philoſophiæ non vaco. Plut. ap. Steph. *When Dr. M. therefore tells us that* ἀσχολέομαι *implies a Leiſure particularly devoted to literary Studies, He contradicts all the Lexicons ancient and modern, and the beſt Greek Authors, who often uſe the Word in a Senſe directly contrary. It is indeed no better than a Blunder, a Miſtake of* ἀσχολέω *for* σχολάζω.—*And yet this is the Man, who would ſend his Anſwerers to School again, and charges them with ſuch a Bigottry as will not allow any Senſe in any Words, which do not tally with their own Prejudices; or with ſuch an Ignorance of the Greek, as is incapable of diſcovering what their Senſe really is.*

was in the Converſion of Heathens, and the Confirmation of Believers, and the Language of the People, amongſt whom He was ſtationed for this good Work, obliged Him to the conſtant Uſe of a barbarous Dialect; and ſuch continual Converſation in an uncouth Language was a very good Reaſon, why his Style in another Tongue might be leſs poliſhed, and why no Artifical Compoſition of Words which He had not learned was to be expected from Him *. He had neither Leiſure, nor Inclination, as He ſignifies, to ſet about a Work of ſo little Importance, and the habitual Uſe of a different and unimproved Dialect might be very likely to diſqualify Him for it. Whereas if He had ſo much Leiſure, as Dr. *M.* repreſents Him to have, as to ſpend the greateſt Part of it in his Study in learning the Language of that Country (for ſome, We know, He ſpent in writing *Greek*) then He could ſcarce avoid remarking on the Difference of the Beauty and Purity of the One above the Other, and He might well retain the former, tho' He might make a ſhift to underſtand the latter.

* *The Engliſh Reader, by Dr.* M's *and Mr.* T's *Repreſentation of the Senſe of the Paſſage, might be ready to conclude, that the Relative* which, *referred to the Language of the* Celtæ; *whereas, the Gender of the original* ἥν, *makes it as certain that* τέχνην *is the Antecedent, as if* Irenæus *had repeated the Word, and ſaid expreſsly,* which Art *we have not learned.*

This

This private Method of attaining the latter was much leſs likely to debaſe his Style, or to occaſion ſuch an Apology upon that Account, than the familiar and daily Uſe of it amongſt his own People: And therefore He ſo particularly mentions his Reſidence amongſt them, and conſtant Application to them in that barbarous Dialect, as the Reaſon why a Negligence of Style and Impropriety of Language might perhaps grow upon Him. And now let Us compare the two Tranſlations. The common Rendring of the Word, and the Reaſon of the Thing, do both confirm that which I had offered, by which *Irenæus* was repreſented *as chiefly engaged in a barbarous Dialect*, that is, by Reaſon of converſing conſtantly with the Natives: Whereas neither the uſual Acceptation of the Word, nor the plain Senſe of the Thing, nor its Relation to the Context, will admit of Dr. *M*'s Tranſlation, in which it is ſaid, that *the greateſt Part of* Irenæus's *Leiſure was intirely imployed upon a barbarous Dialect*, He is repreſented in this very Sentence as ſcarce having any Leiſure, and as almoſt totally taken up with the Work of his Miniſtry; with the proper Offices of an active and vigilant Biſhop, which could not be otherwiſe than in the Language of that Place. What Intervals of Time He could find from his Local Duties,

We ſee He ſpent for the Service of the univerſal Church in Works written in a more univerſal Language. Dr. *M.* Himſelf remarks that He did ſo.

I aſk then, upon a Review of this Paſſage, how it appears that *Irenæus* was in great Want of the Gift of Tongues, or was put to great Difficulty and Trouble in learning the *Celtick* Language, as He is here repreſented to have been? There is not a Word in the Original to denote his *learning* the Language, nor could the Dr. even by his own Tranſlation pervert the Sentence ſo as to imply it. He has made Him indeed mention *Leiſure* even where He was mentioning the Want of it, and was ſpeaking of his almoſt total Engagement with the *Celtæ* in their own Language: But had this been leſs determinate, and ſhould We allow the Dr's Tranſlation, that the *greateſt Part of his Leiſure was entirely imployed upon a barbarous Dialect*; even here there is not a Word ſaid, how He firſt came by the Knowlege of this Language, but how much He was now employed in the Exerciſe of it. Dr. *M.* ſays, it would be ridiculous to ſuppoſe that He was taken up *by writing this barbarous Dialect*; there is Nothing ſaid in the Original about *writing* any more than about *learning* this Language, and yet, notwithſtanding Dr. *M*'s abſolute Determination

mination of it, it is not improbable that He might have occaſional Calls to write to, or for the Uſe of ſome of the People amongſt whom He reſided. But ſuppoſe He did not, his other Labours would fully anſwer the Import of the Expreſſion here uſed. Undoubtedly He confined not his Care and Duty to the ſtated Times and Exerciſes of external Worſhip, but took every Opportunity of inſtructing ſome, and admoniſhing others, of convincing Gainſayers, and confirming Believers; and even diligently ſought out ſuch Opportunities. I ſuppoſe this Good Man's Time and Pains to have been thus employed in ſecuring and teaching, and enlarging his Flock by perſonal Application to Each, as Occaſion offered, as well as by Aſſiſtance in the Aſſemblies of the Faithful; and thus by private as well as publick Exhortations was his Time almoſt engroſſed, in Neither of which could He be of any Service to them but by converſing with them in their own barbarous Dialect, and therefore He might very properly ſay, ἡμῶν τῶν ἐν Κελτοῖς διατριβόντων, καὶ περὶ βάρβαρον διαλεκτον τὸ πλεῖστον ἀσχολουμένων. If Any chuſe with Dr. *M.* to call theſe private Works the *Employment of Leiſure*, yet the Senſe and Argument muſt be the ſame, and theſe in Conjunction with the Diſcharge of the Publick Offices of Religion, might

might well juſtify his ſaying that He was *chiefly engaged in this Language.*

There is yet another and very material Argument to ſhew that this Primitive Biſhop did not in this Place allude to any Difficulty in learning the Language. My Father has proved at large (Diſſert. in Iren. 3 & 4.) that this Work was wrote in *Irenæus*'s Old Age, that He had been now many Years at *Lyons*, firſt a Preſbyter, and then Biſhop. He could not therefore now have the Language to learn; and if He had been put to any Trouble in learning it, that Trouble muſt have now been long over. There could be no Occaſion to mention as an Impediment to his preſent Oratory a Difficulty which had ſo long ſince been paſt; whereas in the other Interpretation the Apology was juſt, for the longer He had been accuſtomed to this barbarous Dialect, the more reaſonably might He apprehend that it might affect and debaſe his Style.

"Here another Queſtion, ſays Dr. *M.* "naturally occurs, in which the Reader by "this Time may be impatient to be ſatisfied, "that is, *by what Means* Irenæus *could acquire* "*the Uſe of this barbarous Dialect, which* "*gave Him ſo much Trouble?*" (P. 94.) As to the *Trouble* of it, This has been ſhewn to be Imaginary, to have no Foundation in the Words

Words of *Irenæus*, but to have been ſupplied intirely by Dr. *M*'s fruitful Imagination. The Queſtion itſelf remains, and Dr. *M.* obſerves, that "on this Head our Doctors are "wholly Silent; They do not chuſe to "affirm directly, that it was infuſed into "Him by *Inſpiration*;" This then is a Proof of their proper Caution, that they would not aſſert, like Dr. *M.* without Authority, nor affirm what they could not Prove. They ſufficiently obviated Dr. *M*'s Objection from *Irenæus*'s ſuppoſed Want of this Gift, which was all that concerned them, as it might ſeem to invalidate his Teſtimony concerning it. If They did not go farther, if they did not think themſelves authorized to determine where Hiſtory is Silent, They may, I hope, ſtand excuſed. To the Queſtion itſelf therefore I ſhall only ſay, that the Knowlege of the *Celtick* Language might be infuſed into *Irenæus*, for any thing that the Dr. has ſhewn to the Contrary; or He might be ſkilled in it before He was ſent into *Gaul*, and might be choſen to that Miſſion for that Reaſon; or if it were allowed that He acquired it afterwards, neither will this be any Objection againſt his plain and poſitive Teſtimony. He was then probably but young, no Biſhop or Leader of the Church. The *Gift of Tongues* might ſtill continue in the Church, and yet every

Preſbyter,

Preſbyter, who was ſent into foreign Parts, might not be endued with it.

It is added as a farther Objection, that "a Dialect infuſed by God could not poſſibly "create any Difficulty to Him, either in learning, ſpeaking, or writing it, ſince the perfect "Uſe of it would be communicated at once, "and would flow from Him as freely as his "Native Tongue." Nor has it been proved that *Irenæus* made any ſuch Complaint of any ſuch peculiar Difficulty. But a Man may be forced by his Situation and Circumſtances, to converſe, or write, or do both, ſo much in a foreign Tongue, as to forget his own, or at leaſt not to be able to write with Propriety and Elegance in it: And this was all that *Irenæus* apprehended from his habitual Uſe of the *Celtick* Tongue.—Dr. *M.* goes on, "much leſs can we Imagine that it (a Dialect "infuſed by God) would debaſe the Purity "of any other more valuable or uſeful Lan"guage, of which He was previouſly poſ"ſeſſed, ſince that would be a real Injury to "Him;" Now in a Chriſtian Account, that is the moſt valuable Language in which moſt Good can be done, and that certainly muſt be the Language of that Country, whatever it was, to which the Providence of God had called a Man to preach the Goſpel. *Irenæus* certainly did not think Himſelf *injured* in being

being made inſtrumental to the Glory of his Redeemer amongſt a barbarous People, even tho' by the conſtant Uſe of their Tongue He might loſe a little of the Propriety and Elegance of the Greek Language. The concluding Remark is, that " whilſt this inabled " Him to preach the Goſpel in one particular " Place, it would render Him leſs able to " preach it with the ſame Force in Another." But neither did the Succeſs of Chriſtianity in any Place depend on their preaching it in the higheſt Terms of Elegance and Oratory, nor if it had, could this have affected the Caſe of *Irenæus*, who ſpent his Life in *Gaul*, and there concluded it.

I have been ſo minute and particular in examining every Argument of the *Vindication*, that I will not lengthen theſe Remarks by reviewing the triumphant Recapitulation. As it reſts on their Strength, it will fall with them, if they are judged inſufficient; and this is freely left to the Judgment of the impartial Reader. I have likewiſe hereby obviated ſome farther Remarks, whereby Mr. *Toll*, in Oppoſition to a Performance far ſuperior to his or mine, thought fit to reinforce his Defence. If he does not yet ſee whither the Tendency of Dr. *M*'s Argument leads, or is determined at all Events to ſupport it, I ſhall content Myſelf with wiſhing Him to

employ his Time better than in this Controverſy, and with taking Care to employ my own otherwiſe; for I feel no Inclination to continue a Diſpute with a Gentleman who can think it Wit or Argument upon this important Subject, to talk of *Providence's ſhewing Tricks*, and of *making a Rout about Miracles.*

ERRATA.

PREFACE, p. 3. l. 11. for *interfered* read *intervened.* P. 26. l. 1. d. *thought fit.* P. 28. l. 24. d. *but.* Book, p. 26. l. 8. for *miraluous* r. *miraculous.* P. 40. l. 29. before *placed* inſert *and.* P. 55. l. 8. for ὑλων r. ὅλων. P. 89. l. 24. for χρεσῶ r. χρισῶ. P. 120. l. 11, 12. d. *and the Nature of the Thing, confirm the Credibility of the Fact.* P. 217. l. 23. before *may* inſert *it.* P. 236. l. 19. for *of* r. *Charge on.* P. 250. l. 26. before *the* inſert *that.* P. 299. l. 5. for *Impoſters* r. *Impoſtors.* P. 400. l. 13. for *hear* r. *here.* P. 411. for *s* r. *as.* P. 481. l. 11. for *occular* r. *ocular.* P. 492. for παραδὸσεως r. παραδὸσεως. P. 494. l. 24. d. *the Caſe of.*

FINIS.

BOOKS printed for S. BIRT *in* Ave-Mary-Lane, London; *and* J. FLETCHER *in* Oxford.

1. A Free Anſwer to Dr. *Middleton*'s Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers of the Primitive Church. In a Letter to a Friend. The Second Edition. By *William Dodwell*, M. A. Rector of *Shotteſbrook*, *Berks*.

Where may be had, by the ſame Author.

2. A Diſſertation on *Jephtah*'s Vow, occaſioned by Mr. *Romaine*'s late Sermon on that Subject.

3. Practical Diſcourſes on Moral Subjects. In Two Volumes *Octavo*.

4. The Eternity of future Puniſhments aſſerted and vindicated, in Anſwer to Mr. *Whiſton*'s late Treatiſe on that Subject. In two Sermons preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*.

5. The Deſireableneſs of the Chriſtian Faith illuſtrated and applied: A Sermon preached at the Triennial Viſitation of the Right Rev. Father in GOD, *Thomas* Lord Biſhop of *Sarum*, held at *Reading* on *Thurſday Auguſt* 30, 1744.

6. The Nature, Procedure, Extent, Value and Effects of a Rational Faith conſidered.

In

In two Sermons preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford*.

7. The Practical Influence of the Doctrine of the *Holy Trinity* repreſented. A Sermon preached before the Univerſity of *Oxford* on *Trinity Sunday*, *June* 9, 1745.

9. The Nature, Extent and Support of Human Laws conſidered. A Sermon preached at the Aſſizes held at *Oxford* by the Hon. Mr. Baron *Clark* and Mr. Juſtice *Foſter*, on *Thurſday March* 8, 1749. Publiſhed at the Requeſt of Mr. Vice Chancellor and the Heads of Houſes.